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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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STATUE OF SIR THOMAS BROWNE
Haymarket, Norwich, England.

Keep Them Alive

THERE is a suggestion of irony in the many warnings to the book trade to set its house in order in this period of distress, since the temptation, especially among bookshops, is to respond by locking the door. And yet, at the risk of tiresome repetition, one criticism of publishing as it is now conducted should be set down again in print. Books are allowed too short a life. Publishers rush editions off the presses, fling them to the market, and rush back for another title. Like a small boy fishing, if there isn't a bite immediately they pull up and try another bait. Dead, half-dead, quarter-dead books, and books that never came alive, stock booksellers' shelves and remainder counters. In a few weeks after issuing the publisher has lost interest in his product, and is putting all thought and energy into new ones. So has the bookseller, but for a different reason. He moves the forgotten books, unsold, to a back counter to make way for a new consignment.

We have discussed before the demoralization of the market and the lowered efficiency of reviewing which results from this hustle and bustle. But there is a still stronger argument against the practice. It does not fit the reading habits of the public.

The theory is that in books only novelty has any appeal, that everyone who reads wants the latest, and will take no other. If this theory is more true than healthy, it is the fault of publishers' advertising which has for years now stressed the just published and, by implication, passed the last month's books on to desuetude. But it is not entirely true, not more than half true. A few, a very few try to read all the "featured" books as soon as they appear. More, many more, make mental notes, from the advertisement first, and then from the various reviews, of books that interest them, and get round to them when they can, and if they remember. They read by fits and starts and according to opportunity, and whether they buy a given book eventually depends upon whether they are reminded that there is a book going that they want. By that time the publisher has forgotten it and ceased mentioning it in his advertising, the bookseller has sold his few copies and ordered no more since his space is mortgaged to the next new books, the reviews have long since passed it by, and thus the impulse to buy and read meets with an "out of stock" or with pressure to buy something else "just out."

Those who travel much in these United States report that waves of interest in good new books roll westward, southward, northward from New York, moving slowly by word of mouth until in the remoter districts books are being talked about when the publisher remembers only their titles in the city of their origin. For the publisher thinks of his sales, thinks of his advertising, thinks of his publicity and his follow up, in terms of the time of New York. He publishes for the nation, but sells as for and as of New York.

And what shall we say of the best readers and buyers of all, who save money to buy books, and save time to read them, and have always the will and usually the means to acquire every book of merit that appeals to their taste in a year's publication? Is it any wonder that they take to the libraries in doubt of the worth of their prospective purchases, or forget the books they meant to buy, when every advertisement, every reviewing medium, is crowded with hot novelties and so-called fresh and better versions of earlier themes; when many of the books they want are already to be had only of the publisher or on a remainder counter or, by chance, in a cigar store or a railroad station!

Novelty has always its price, but the magazine gets it much more successfully than the book. Some good books are timely and nothing else, but the vast majority are good for years of reading or good for nothing at all. Yet the whole organization, methods, interest of the trade in new books is diametrically opposed, and wilfully blind to this fact, is fighting

(*Continued on next page*)

Time Table

By FANNY DE GROOT HASTINGS

LEAVE, arrive—leave, arrive;
Hours and minutes — nothing alive;
Names of places, neatly printed,
Nothing of parting and meeting hinted;
Nothing of trees woven in screens
By the spinning wheels of hurtling machines;
Nothing of mountains, cloven in twain
To make a path for an all steel train;
Nothing of stars keeping their place,
Or moon with her white ironical face—
Illusively still, never out-run,
What cares she for seconds spun?
Nothing of strangers side by side,
Sharing a brief, fantastic ride;
Nothing of melting ice at the mouth
Of a frozen river flowing south;
Nothing of miles of frosted downs,
Nothing of bright kaleidoscoped towns;
Nothing of all the transient scene
Visibly fluid, rushing between
The stiff, plush seats of a crowded car
And the fixity of the evening star.

Leave, arrive—arrive, leave;
Time to rejoice, time to grieve,
But there is no space on a time table sheet
To record the length of a full heart beat.
The west-bound special leaves at three;
The rest belong to eternity.

The Quincuncial Doctor

By LLEWELYN POWYS

SIR THOMAS BROWNE in a celebrated passage defined man as "that amphibious piece between a corporeal and spiritual essence," and if, with a certain freedom, we stretch his odd words they could be made to apply to his own literary position, for his "intellectual image" seems poised exactly midway between the barbarous spiritual imaginings of ancient thought and the rational materialistic method of modern science. In that strange crepuscular period between the reign of superstition and the reign of reason that characterized the Seventeenth Century, the mind of Sir Thomas Browne flits and flickers like a twilight bat, not quite animal, not quite bird, aberrant, anomalous, heteroclite.

No English writer possesses a more elaborate, a more capricious, a more completely *literary* style than does this pious witch-burning physician who for forty years went to and fro over the cobble stones of old Norwich in the performance of his "drudging practise." To anyone seeing him in those picturesque Restoration days crossing the Cathedral Close, crossing the open space before St. Peter's Mancroft, it would have seemed incredible that this unassuming gentleman, so sedate in his dress, and "obeying some queer medical crotchets as to its proper arrangement," could be in possession of a genius excelling all in its idiosyncratic spiral convolutions. Yet beneath these "scenical and accidental differences," beneath this country doctor's sober jacket, breathed a man of infinite ingenuity and of infinite parts, a man of a humor so utterly unique that it lives as freshly today as it did two hundred and fifty years ago. The far-fetched conceits of Sir Thomas Browne's mind, the subtle flights it can take as it swoops and hovers over its prodigious miscalculations, its eloquence rising suddenly like a lark from shard or straw high as the sun, sets him apart from all other writers.

Possibly the most extravagant of his crotchets was his conviction that the number five manifests itself as some obscure mystical secret. He does not hesitate to encourage us to investigate the cause of the surprising repetitions of this number, and assures us that if we do so we shall not pass our hours "in vulgar speculations." Coleridge declared that Browne found "quincunxes in heaven above, quincunxes in earth below, quincunxes in the mind of man, quincunxes in tones, in optic nerves, in roots of trees, in leaves, in everything." The starfish had five pointers, feet were equipped with five toes, and the scriptures record the numbers of the wise and foolish virgins to have been Five. Quincunx! Quincunx! He himself—scholar, doctor, antiquarian, author, and man of God—was a Quincunx, and it may very well have been these five qualifications that gave to his prose its singular incommunicable accent.

It cannot be denied that much of his elaborate ratiocination was founded on the grossest misconceptions for it is impossible to exaggerate his capacity for credulous incredulity. He was persuaded, for example, that the body and soul utterly perished at death, and yet he continued steadfastly to believe that they would be miraculously raised on the Resurrection Day, and he can forthwith give expression to this creed in a manner so religious, imaginative, and sonorous that, willynilly, it takes to itself a kind of rubric cadence. "God by a powerful Voice shall command them back into their proper shapes, and call them out by their single individuals: then shall appear the fertility of Adam, and the majick of that sperm that hath dilated into so many millions."

Truly his celebrated skull, much crowned with hair "of a color answerable to his name," was a casket packed close with a veritable gallimaufry of conflicting notions. His orthodox religious views, with their "courteous revelations," played their part; the legends and hearsay of the ancients their part; and no scrap of information, religious or profane, but had to receive its quaint pentagonal stamp proving that it had passed through the singular crucible of his super-eccentric adjudication. The more winding the turns that his meditations took, the better was he pleased. "I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my Reason to an O altitudo!" His delight is to ponder over obsolete heresies, "such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant irregular heads as mine."

No crack, no cranny of Divinity is secure against his presentation of some perplexing dubiety two dimensions removed from any problem that any ordinary mind might light upon. "That Eve was edified out of the Rib of Adam, I believe, yet raise no question who shall arise with that Rib at the Resurrection." He claims credit for being able to read of the story of Lazarus without raising "a law case whether his heir might lawfully detain his inheritance bequeathed unto him by his death, and he, though restored to life, have no place or title under his former possessions." He is concerned to ascertain what exact species of fish it was that Jesus ate on the shore of the Lake of Galilee after His Resurrection.

In his "Vulgar Errors" he spends infinite time weighing the credibility of this or

This Week

MAUROIS, WESCOTT, & W. H. HALE.
Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD.

"NONSUCH."
Reviewed by SAMUEL SCOVILLE, JR.

"THE FOUNTAIN."
Reviewed by HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON.

"SUMMER HOLIDAY."
Reviewed by CHRISTINA H. BAKER.

"ON BEING CREATIVE."
Reviewed by G. R. ELLIOTT.

DANGEROUS DIARIES.
By LEONARD BACON.

A PASSING STRANGER.
By W. S. H.

Next Week, or Later

"AMERICA AS AMERICANS SEE IT."
By FRED J. RINGEL. Reviewed by WALTER MILLIS.

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that "old and gray-headed" rumor. He considers that we are justified in taking the words of Plutarch "in a soft and flexible sense" when he asserts that "the brain of a Phoenix is a pleasant bit, but it causeth the headache." Tentatively, after many preambles and hesitations and arguments for and against, he comes to the conclusion that the existence of the bird must be referred "unto consideration." He arrives at this decision for the reason that the bird has never been seen, though the importance of this point was sharply disputed by Sir Thomas Browne's adversary, Alexander Ross, who accounts for this fact in the following manner. The Phoenix knowing itself to be unique is instinctively actuated by the strongest desire at all times and in all places to keep out of sight and thereby secure against preventable accidents.

Sir Thomas Browne's vision of the world was "asquint upon reflex or shadow." It was such a world as we see represented on old tapestries where a land-unicorn, because of its "glory," is compelled to graze upon a sloping bank; a world suggested on ancient ocean maps in which sea-unicorns are portrayed with "glories" of such strength and bigness as are able to penetrate the ribs of ships. He sets himself to examine with reasoning unreason all the fabulous talk invented by the barbarous fancies of men as little by little they have adjusted their evolving consciousness to the phenomena of the natural world.

> That some Elephants have not only written whole sentences . . . but have also spoken . . . although it sound like that of Achilles' Horse in Homer, we do not conceive impossible. . . . The Serpent that spake unto Eve, the Dogs and Cats that usually speak unto Witches, might afford some encouragement. And since broad and thick chops are required of speaking Birds, etc., etc.

He holds that there is no "high improbability in the relation" that the Basilisk, the little King of Serpents, "poisoneth by the eye and by priority of vision," but in a sentence that smacks of severity he feels compelled to qualify his confidence as to the report of its engendering. "As for the generation of the Basilisk that it proceedeth from a Cock's egg hatched under a Toad or a Serpent it is a conceit as monstrous as the brood itself." He finds it difficult to believe that the pigmies during their perennial wars with the cranes ride into battlefield on the backs of partridges; and as for the report that napkins are woven from the wool of a Salamander he regards it as "a fallacious enlargement" considering the hairless nature of the skin of the creature, a Salamander being "a kind of Lizard, a quadruped, corticated and depilous."

It is extraordinarily engaging to picture the "painful" and curious doctor in his old garden house, described by Evelyn as "a cabinet of rarities," carrying out his various empirical tests: hanging up dead kingfishers to see whether or no their azure bodies do, in very truth, show the quarter of the wind "by an occult and secret propriety," and discovering to his discomforture that they seldom "breasted it right": keeping vipers in a glass and feeding them on bran and cheese: to his shame fastening a "little frog of an excellent Parrat-green" about a span under water to see how long it would live without air: collecting examples of worked flints—"Faery stones, elve spurs": discovering the eyes of a mole, or "moll" as he calls it, "those little orbs": confirming the report by trial in his own larder that peacock's flesh "roast or boiled" will preserve a long time "incorrupted": shutting up toads and spiders together to discover whether there was truth or no in the tale of their ancient enmity: dissecting the neck of a swan, and as an explanation of its dying melody, noting "the serpentine and trumpet recurvation" of the bird's windpipe.

He has an eye for everything. No experiment is too delicate for him. He studies the deathwatch beetle: "We have taken many thereof and kept them in their boxes wherein I have heard and seen them work and knack with a little proboscis or trunk against the side of the box, like a Picus Martius or Woodpecker against the tree." He discovers at the bottoms of the flowers of his tulips "a small bee-like fly of an excellent fragrant odour." He is fascinated to observe the seed of silkworms "hatched on the bodies of women."

On occasions his observation would appear almost too narrow. In many country churches the royal arms of England still hang where they were set up at the time of the Restoration. The conventional rendering of the heraldic animals must stand corrected under Sir Thomas Browne's strict scrutiny. "If in the Lion, the position of the pizel be proper, and that the natural situation; it will be hard to make out their retro-copulation or their coupling and pissing backward, according to the determination of Aristotle; All that urine backward do copulate aversely as Lions, Hares, etc."

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE.

A whale was washed ashore at a little place called Wells, in Norfolk, and in spite of the fact that he had often declared his interest more piqued by the ants than by the larger animals ("Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of Nature, Whales, Elephants, Dromidaries, and Camels; these, I confess, are the Colossus and Majestick pieces of her hand: but in these narrow Engines [ants] there is more curious Mathematicks; and the civility of these little Citizens, more neatly sets forth the Wisdom of their Maker"), he is now all on fire to search for ambergris. But alas! the whale had been dead "divers days" and we read this doleful account, "In vain was it to rake for ambrgreece in the paunch of this Leviathan." In vain to call to memory that "Paracelsus encourageth, ordure makes the best musk and from the most fetid substances may be drawn the most odoriferous essences."

It is indeed easy enough to make merry with the various turns taken by Sir Thomas Browne's quincuncial intelligence, but we would have considered his writings in vain if we failed to bring back to our memory some of those semi-philosophical, semi-religious utterances that give to his style so impressive and so mysterious a music—a music as deep as the music of the oceans, airy as the music of the spheres, a music that seems indeed to be in alliance with that eternity "which maketh pyramids pillars of snow, and all that's past a moment."

"The world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but Pantalones and Anticks to my severer contemplations."

"Fortune, that serpentine and crooked line."

"There is therefore a secret glome or bottome of our days."

"There is surely a piece of Divinity in us, something that was before the Elements, and owes no homage unto the sun."

Finally, in one of the greatest and most moving passages that his imaginative faith ever inspired—"However, I am sure there is a common Spirit that plays within us, yet makes no part of us; and that is the Spirit of God, the fire and scintillation of that noble an[illegible]ty Essence, which is the life an[illegible]al heat of Spirits, and their esse[illegible]t know not the vertue of the Sur[illegible] quite contrary to the fire of Hell: This is that gentle heat that broodeth on the waters, and in six days hatched the World; this is that irradiation that dispels the mists of Hell, the clouds of horrour, fear, sorrow, despair; and preserves the region of the mind in serenity."

Llewelyn Powys, who has at various times been a resident of the United States and a rancher in Africa, and is now living in his native England, is one of a family of noted writers. Among his works are "Ebony and Ivory" and "Black Laughter."

A Challenge to Boredom

A PRIVATE UNIVERSE. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1932. $2.50.

FEAR AND TREMBLING. By GLENWAY WESCOTT. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1932. $3.50.

CHALLENGE TO DEFEAT. By WILLIAM HARLAN HALE. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

WRITING of *Americans In Crisis*, "What was the result of the crisis," asks M. Maurois, "on the small group of rebels whom we observed in 1927?" And he replies: "It would appear that it has drawn this group closer to the herd; or more exactly, that the mass has drawn closer to this group. Men in general are beginning to see that the rebels were right in declaring that there were other things in human life beyond prosperity. Having less money for the pleasures of excitement, they turn towards the pleasures of culture. This, of course, is true as yet only of a select minority; but, for example, in the universities of the Eastern States one no longer finds the young intellectuals spurned by the athletes. The result is that the intellectual ceases to be a rebel and becomes more constructive." M. Maurois is a disinterested observer, always temperate in his judgments. It is true, I believe, that the average American, during the past three years, has been progressively jolted a few inches toward the left, and that he has been slightly infected by the disease of thought. There is small evidence as yet, however, that the infection is likely to prove severe.

I do not know whether Mr. Glenway Wescott may properly be classed with the "small group of rebels" of 1927. He is primarily, I suspect, an artist in prose fiction, and his present critical commentary on our immediate difficulties and confusions makes one rather regret the novel whose creation has thus been postponed. Frankly, Mr. Wescott's agreeably written commentary slides across consciousness, with a minimum of friction, leaving virtually no trace behind. Doubtless the fault is largely mine, but I confess (not without fear and trembling) that I am unable to grasp what Mr. Wescott is attempting to say in this by no means brief volume. I understand each flowing sentence as it passes, I seem to follow the windings of each well-composed paragraph, yet I end as I began. Nothing has happened to me. Though there is probably an explanation for this which is anything but flattering to the reviewer, it is merely honest that an impression of futility should be recorded. With whom the fault ultimately lies is a question which other and wiser heads must, so far as this reviewer is concerned, be left to decide.

With the admirably balanced and controlled mind of M. Maurois there are no difficulties to experience; there are perhaps not enough. Intelligence, clarity, poise, are rare gifts (less rare among the intellectuals of France than elsewhere), but we of the more chaotic races are not always fully nourished by them. That the best lighting system for mortals is ordinary daylight is doubtless true; but there is a good deal to be said for the unexpected flash of fire at midnight: in a fractional second of burning vision the too familiar, the habitual, is revealed as the infinitely strange. M. Maurois is too civilized a being, however, to indulge himself in hurling bolts; he prefers to be a source of equably diffused illumination.

The private universe which he thus softly yet completely lights up for us, bidding us enter and placing us at our ease, is a universe of gently sceptical and entirely unexcited intellectual curiosity and integrity. His central conviction (for all scepticism is founded on a central faith) is a belief in the necessary relativity of all human guesses at truth. "If," he writes, "our epoch is capable of contributing an original philosophy, it is one of absolute relativity." In a brief, cool, lucid essay he applies this philosophy to the present economic chaos, and it brings him to such quiet statements as these: "There is no such thing as economic truth; or rather, every moment has its own economic truth. . . . It is not immoral to be a capitalist, it is not criminal to be a communist; but it would be intelligent to admit that every doctrine is baneful if it is rigid. . . . Economic rulers should hold a doctrine only for the provisional co-ordination of their actions." In other words, man's wisdom is limited, in every field, to the experimental and the expedient. Mournful conclusion? Not necessarily, answers M. Maurois. An American editor demands of him: "Do you not think that modern Science, by . . . expelling from the heavens the divinities who formerly dwelt there, has robbed us of the illusions which alone enabled men to live? . . . Where do you find your consolations and your hopes? In fact—on what hidden treasure do you live?" M. Maurois smiles over this letter; his nimble novelist's fancy sets to work.

A colony from Earth, from England, has established itself on the Moon. They are ruled, in their ideas and ideals, by the King of England—to them for ever silent and invisible. In the course of generations the young intellectuals of the colony have come to doubt his reality. But beware! (say the Conservatives): "If you strip the Earth planet of our King . . . what meaning will your life have

(*Continued on next page*)

ANDRÉ MAUROIS.

Keep Them Alive

(*Continued from preceding page*)

at tremendous expense and with a frightful waste of discarded books, the natural and proper reading methods of the public. They have tried to sell books as if they were magazines, and they have failed.

We must in short decide whether our books are like flowers or like marmalade —flowers to be fresh cut daily because they wilt by evening, or marmalade that can be stored until it is time for toast and tea. And if a good book should be kept alive until its clientele find it (and of course it can and should be) then publishers' advertising (which just now is composed too much for the bookseller, too little for the reader and buyer) should help, and editorial departments, which keep smothering new books with newer ones, should exercise restraint, and magazines like *The Saturday Review* should do their part in retrospect and reappraisal and renewed recommendation. We at least propose to reform, and do our best to keep good new books alive at least while the gloss of a year's freshness is still on them. After that, if they are fit, they will take care of themselves.

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for you then? What will be the mainsprings of your energy? On what hidden treasure will you live?" Then, for the first time, a great writer appears on the Moon—a lyrical philosopher, who addresses an imaginary disciple, Selenos. And "'Why,'" he asks, "'Why Selenos, do you seek the meaning of life elsewhere than in life itself? . . . The sophists are teaching you to-day that life is but a short movement . . . that nothing exists but defeat and death. But I say to you . . . live as if you were eternal, and do not believe that your life is changed because they have proved to you that the Earth is empty. You are not living on the Earth, Selenos, but in yourself, yourself alone.'"

Live *as if* you were eternal! That also, if I read him rightly, is one-half of the central message of William Harlan Hale, whose "Challenge To Defeat" is the most significant utterance that has yet come from our youngest literary generation. Mr. Hale—as each of his successive reviewers points out with an astonishment more than a little patronizing—is but twenty-one; and he has actually dared to publish a thoughtful, eloquent, fighting book—a rallying cry to Youth.

My own initial amazement on reading this book springs from the fact that Mr. Hale is not *afraid* to be eloquent. He writes with frankness, energy, and conviction. Here, surely, is something so outmoded as to be startlingly new in this self-conscious, ironic, wise-cracking world. God help the youngsters of yesterday and the day before—they were born with their tongues in their hollow cheeks! Mr. Hale has a better use for his. He is bent on drastic criticism, solid exposition, and final persuasion; he is not concerned to be paradoxical or clever; and if he utters an occasional platitude he is too busy and serious to blush for it. There happens to be something he wants to get said—something which he believes important. And I agree with him. It *is* important, and it has been waiting to be said. "Challenge To Defeat" is a protest, a deeply conceived and thoroughly informed protest, against the futilitarianism in life and art of the post-war generations.

To put it quite simply (perhaps too simply) Mr. Hale, speaking for the young intellectuals who are coming of age *now* —1932—says in effect: "We are sick of futility. This is our world; we must live in it; and we shall at least try to make it worth living in. If we are to do so, we must first conceive a humanism that is not merely academic, sterile. A genuine humanism, whose 'general function is to bring the objective, scientific attitude into a true relationship to the individual; and to broaden the subjective, artistic attitude into a view of abiding principles and truths that transcend the individual. Amid the vast apparent negation of the macrocosm, our own microcosm stands as a vast affirmation: the human truth, the human value, the human will. These things remain. They do not pass, so long as humanity is there to perceive them.'"

And, finally: "We may be the clowns in a comedy for the gods, but we shall play our parts to the finish, and know that our acting is the veriest reality; and when the play is played out, it may not have been so poor a show."

Is not that preferable to Conrad Aiken's vision of himself as a vaudeville stage across which a disjointed and comparatively meaningless series of acts is perpetually passing?

I agree with Mr. Hale that we are quite capable (even putting life at its lowest) of presenting the gods with a better organized entertainment than that. I agree with Mr. Hale (and thus far disagree with M. Maurois) that our universes, these latter years, have been far too private. As for Mr. Wescott, there is at least one intuition of his which I was able to understand and to applaud. "What sort of being," he asks himself, "is an angel?" And he replies, "A creature incapable of boredom. . . ."

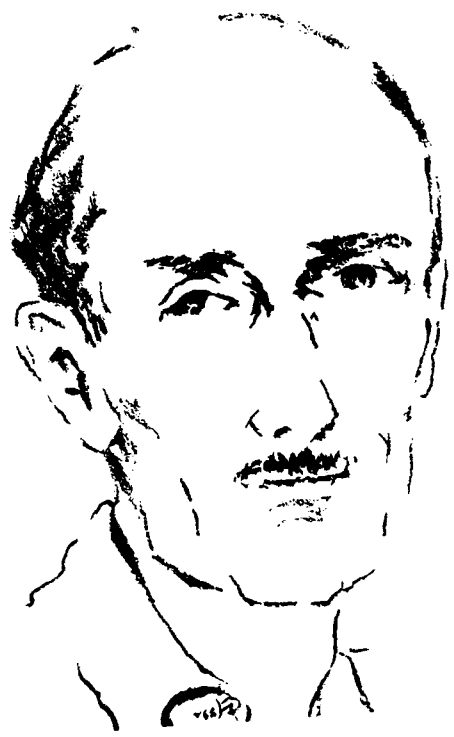
We have latterly much needed in our lives something of this superb angelic incapacity—since boredom is the mother of defeat. It is Boredom herself, that slutish Anarch fouling our minds and hearts, whom Mr. Hale has challenged to mortal combat. M. Maurois snug in his private universe, will perhaps smile at a certain bravado in this youthful gesture, but his smile will be indulgent; and in justice to M. Maurois it must be added that, though dwelling in retirement, safely above the battle, he is never bored.

An Enchanted Island

NONSUCH. By WILLIAM BEEBE. New York: Brewer, Warren & Putnam. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by SAMUEL SCOVILLE, JR.

TO an ordinary observer Nonsuch is an island among the Bermudas of sand and cedars, of coral reefs and petrified eolian sand. William Beebe has magicked it into a land of enchantment where are to be found wildfolk, strange and new, and where commonplace things, by some strange sea-change, are metamorphosed into shapes of unearthly beauty. This book in which



WILLIAM BEEBE.

he has depicted it, is the first of four concerning life in Bermudian waters, to be written by Dr. Beebe as director of the Department of Tropical Research of the New York Zoölogical Society.

Although no volume by Beebe has appeared since 1928, his pen has not lost either its cunning or its color. Some years ago this reviewer visited Bermuda and noted in his commonplace-book that the snowy breast of the yellow-billed tropic bird, as it flew over the sapphire and ultramarine water, was stained lune-green —and rather prided himself on his observation. That was before he had read what Dr. Beebe had to say about that bird.

> Their breasts are as immaculate as snow but over the shallows their plumage takes on the faintest, most delicate of pale chrysoprase, and far out from the land, where the water draws its color from a full mile depth of ocean, the reflection touches the plumage with a bubble-thin tint of ultramarine. When we see a tropic bird in full plumage on its nest in sunlight, within arm's length, a new color impinges upon our retina—we can no longer call its breast and tail white, and we cannot say that they are salmon or pink, the delicacy of this new real tone survives no human-made name, it is sheer beauty.

William Beebe has an unerring sense not only of color and beauty but also of adventure.

A hawk's nest on the Great Pyramid; the sights from his Bathysphere at the greatest depth under water—1,200 feet—ever reached by a living man; the strange forms of life to be found in the tree-tops of a tropical forest, never reached before his time because of fire ants—all of these Beebe describes with a gusto which makes them fatally interesting from a scientific standpoint, for adventure, color, and beauty are anathema and maranatha to the average scientist, as Seton and Hudson found out to their cost. Just as "Life Histories of Northern Animals" and "Birds of La Plata" at last established them in scientific circles, so "A Monograph of the Pheasants" enabled Beebe to live down in scientific circles, the sheer beauty and romance of "Jungle Peace."

In this, his latest book, there are the same series of little delightful adventures which so distress members of learned societies. Shooting flying-fish, fishing for blue sharks, rounding up a herd of fresh-hatched sea-horses, rescuing drowning tropic birds, and discovering an island of rare Audubon shear-waters, are some of them. He stresses the fact, too, which all nature observers find out sooner or later, that "to be a good naturalist one must be a stroller or a creeper or better still a squatter."

One never reads any of Beebe's books without feeling that he experiences that strange, indefinable emotion which only the real nature lover can ever hope to know. It is more than contentment, it is more than pleasure, it is even beyond happiness. It is something which children have and which comes to a few of us in adult years at times out under the open sky. The sight of some exquisite orchid in the dusk of a hidden marsh, the song of the veery at twilight, or of the hermit-thrush at dawn, the finding of a rare nest —any of these may arouse in the initiate a certain indescribable ecstasy which can be felt but scarcely described. It is that quality of joy which shines out in all of Beebe's books and gleams in every chapter of "Nonsuch."

Prisoner's Love

THE FOUNTAIN. By CHARLES MORGAN. New York: Alfred Knopf. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

THIS is such a good book that it is quite disheartening to write about it. For what can one say?

The usual praise, "read it at one sitting" or "this is the greatest masterpiece of all time since the greatest masterpiece of all time that appeared yesterday" or "not since the days of Dante and Sinclair Lewis, etc., etc."?

No, all this will hardly fit the case. It is just a very civilized book, a quiet book, a book without any pictures, an interesting story interestingly told, and when the tale has come to its logical conclusion, one puts the volume aside as if one had read the private letter of a close friend who had passed through a very trying experience. Perhaps in the morning one would answer him. Perhaps one would not. It would not matter. Answer or no answer, your friendship would continue as of old. This is a good book, and it comes as a breath of fresh country air after six months of New York city streets.

Mr. Morgan, apparently, is a survivor of the great Antwerp fiasco, engineered and directed by that past master of brilliant and useless failures, the Right Hon. Winston Churchill, who only recently honored our lecture platform with his imposing presence and his impassioned appeal for Anglo-Saxon solidarity.

This unfortunate expedition, minus everything except sublime ignorance of the terrain across which it was expected to operate and an astounding amount of good will and useless courage, was forced across the Dutch border like a foot-ball player forced out of bounds by his opponent. The Dutch, while trying to take care of half a million Belgian refugees, also found themselves favored with the cheery remnant of an entire British naval brigade which hardly knew whence it was coming and was almost sublimely ignorant of its final place of destination.

They were pleasant and acceptable young men. Their officers would have been agreeable week-end guests and the privates would have made excellent servants. But they wore khaki uniforms. They must therefore be treated and regarded as "interned soldiers"—a status that has been most clearly defined in the handbooks on international war, but that will always remain a puzzle to the public at large. For a regular "prisoner of war" is your enemy, and you are allowed to hate him to your heart's content. But a merely "interned" soldier has never done you nothing (as the common saying was), so why lock him up behind a barbed-wire fence as if he were a wild animal? But if you did not lock him up, he would run away and that would cause endless international complications. So you locked him up, but you told him you really did not mean it, and if he would only sign a little slip of paper, promising on his word of honor that he would not try and run away, you would give him the freedom of the city.

But the war was young. So were most of the interned officers. And beating the Dutch authorities at their own game became a delightful out-door and in-door sport, a game with definite rules of its own, like cheating the Internal Revenue officers of our own free land or bringing in a dozen cribs at an examination with a particularly difficult professor.

On the whole, this tug-of-war was harder on the keepers than on the prisoners, for in this case the jailor had no earthly reason to keep his unwelcome charges behind the bars, and the idea of shooting a man for such a harmless exploit as swimming a moat or digging a tunnel was of course out of the question. Finally, in their despair, the Dutch bethought themselves of two inaccessible spots, the strange little two-by-four island of Urk in the center of the Zuyder Zee (but one prisoner actually swam ashore!) and a forgotten fortress in the heart of the polderland, built two hundred years before to prevent the French from raiding Amsterdam.

The boredom in both places was indescribable. The poor inmates, rather than go crazy in the midst of so much water and mud and so many sad willow trees, bethought themselves of friends at home who had friends who once had known some one who had had a friend whose friends once upon a time knew a Dutchman. Armed with one of those long-distance letters of introduction, they established contacts. Then they signed the little slip of paper and, armed with this paper parole, they went forth into that bizarre war-time society of Holland, where people stoked their stoves with gigantic spit-balls made out of old newspapers and paid two dollars for a lemon

CHARLES MORGAN.

and fifty dollars for the last bottle of genuine Benedictine. And it is from one of these "contacts" that the moving love story which makes the plot of this book takes its origin.

I had always wondered why the peregrinations of these lost souls (four years out of their lives in the midst of absolutely strange surroundings!) should not have found a willing chronicler. Charles Morgan has become the Xenophon of these four thousand during their period of exile, and the biographer of the spiritual and emotional adventures of one of them among the Dutch. A charming and delightful and thoroughly civilized book, a piece of living history of a past that is as dead as the adventurer of Froissart.

As one of the survivors who knew both sides of the picture (an ambiguous and very uncomfortable position) I can state that he has done his task with admirable restraint and good taste. I even must have seen him. I dined one day at the old fort with the preposterous commander, the ruin of an excellent horseman who in his old days (long after the handsome blue uniform with the frogs had been cast aside) got mixed up in one of the inevitable post-war scandals of some "high

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finance" crooks, who had borrowed this noble old man to cover up their disreputable dealings. But the dinner was very awkward. The prisoners saw us arrive full of hope. Had we come with maps and files and rolls of blue ten-guilder bills? Alas, we had come with another little slip of paper, duly signed and sealed, containing our solemn oath that we would enter into no negotiations whatsoever to assist the interned British officers in any efforts at escape. Little slips of paper here and little slips of paper there. Out of it have come almost five hundred pages of printed paper which I recommend to the reader who still regards books as the shortest road to that spiritual and emotional com-

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH.

panionship without which life would be almost as dull as the cauliflower existence of the fort near Bodegraven.

A Novel of Childhood

SUMMER HOLIDAY. By SHEILA KAYE-SMITH. New York: Harper & Bros. 1932. $2.00.

Reviewed by CHRISTINA H. BAKER

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH has surprised those many readers who watch for each succeeding novel, by something quite new for her. Here is an intimate and humorous study of two children, seven and five years old, in the English countryside setting that she knows so perfectly. The fields, the woods, the farm-yard are made visible to us with deftly selected detail. But the little sisters are revealed to us by their words and thoughts and actions alone, with a clarity and authenticity that make one eager for a play from Miss Kaye-Smith. By their talk alone they are as real as any children to be seen or touched. Selina's eagerness for attention, for love, for justice; her turning to that compensatory world of her imagination where "Trimmer" lived in the independence and beauty that Selina longed for; Moira, far more adapted to this harsh world, with her humor and practicality; the detachment from parents; the enveloping security created by Nurse, psychologically always wrong, but unchanging; the English atmosphere that yet does not prevent an American's delighted verification by his own memories; the humor of situation and of speech—all this is as entertaining and as interesting on second reading as on first. Of how many books can this be said?

That the book is autobiographical seems unmistakable. For Selina, grown-up, would indeed write Sheila Kaye-Smith's novels. This makes the story intriguing—an Ariadne thread to understanding Miss Kaye-Smith. This reviewer has turned back to the early novels and tried to follow their themes through the 25 years. The first novel, "The Tramping Methodist" (1908), shows a man's escape from reality into emotional religion. In "Starbrace" (1909) and in "Spellland" (1910) again the world is against a man and refuge is found in nature and in religion. By 1913, in "Isle of Thorns," the maturer woman first turns from a man's to a woman's sorrows, but religion is again the escape, as is love and sacrifice in "Three Against the World" (1914). Between this last and "The Village Doctor" (1929), where love is refuge, comes "Joanna Godden." Here is no escape, but a gallant acceptance and facing of life. Nor is there a trace of Selina in Joanna's character.

To this reviewer, here is Miss Kaye-Smith's best work. She has portrayed with objectivity as well as with skill.

"Sinners in Sackcloth" (1930) returns to the religious escape and "Susan Spray" (1931) repeats the first theme, the Methodist preacher. At the same time appeared the "Mirror of the Months," a religious prose-poem where nature is etched like winter branches against the sky, cool, delicate, intricate, and the Religious Year mirrors not only the months but apparently Sheila Kaye-Smith's own escape into even such an ordered scheme of beauty and compensation as little Selina groped for in her childish imagination. Indeed in Miss Kaye-Smith's Mary, Mother and Virgin, perfect in experience and super-knowledge, may one not see a completed vision of that "Trimmer" who represented Selina's ideal?

From the revivalist that engaged her youthful sympathy, up to the peak where she created a character that had no roots in self-knowledge, back to the revivalist again, and now yet further back to her early memories, Miss Kaye-Smith has moved. Her skill in presentation has steadily increased. She has a completed technique in fiction.

Creative Imitation

ON BEING CREATIVE AND OTHER ESSAYS. By IRVING BABBITT. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by G. R. ELLIOTT
Amherst College

THE main theme of Professor Babbitt's sixth book is the present state of the imagination, in literature, morals, and religion. His thesis may be summarized as follows. During the past two centuries the imagination has become associated more and more with sheer spontaneity. In our time this tendency has reached an absurd and degenerate extreme. Our imaginative writers are pursuing spontaneity and originality to the point of achieving "the ultimate worm's-eye view of life." They are wriggling "from depth to depth of triviality." Any experience that any individual may have at any time, so long as it appears to be spontaneous, is assumed to have the right to sway his imagination. Our youngsters are growing up in an atmosphere of "self-expression" that befogs the vital meaning of moral principles. And our advanced religionists, in their anxiety to be free from old dogmas, are freeing themselves also from "the facts of human nature"—in favor of "creative" emotion. We have fallen into "a veritable cant on the subject of creation." This word, in defiance of its root meaning, has become practically synonymous with sheer spontaneous overflow.

Originality having come to such a pass, "the most original thing one could do nowadays would be to question the whole theory of originality as mere temperamental overflow that has prevailed since the eighteenth century." A shrewd and disillusioned criticism of that theory could lead us to revive, in fresh form, the ancient idea of *imitation*. This idea at its best does not mean slavish copying: it means true human freedom. Our individual lives are so little, so "rounded with a sleep," that spontaneity means slavery when it submerges us in the flux of our passing experiences. To win freedom we must focus our imagination upon "the true human universal," i. e., upon what appears to be central in human experience as a whole. This does not mean the abrogation of real individuality. For the human universal is not an absolute, a rigid fixture. It is "a oneness that is always changing." But it provides us with workable standards. And only in bringing these standards to bear upon our individual lives may we achieve real personality instead of mere particularism; rich and shapely spontaneity instead of mere effusion; and true creation instead of "a subrational parody" of creation. Right imitation—the effort to guide and shape our own experiences in the light of the universal—is creative.

So far, so good (in my opinion). But in this book there is a certain paradox. Mr. Babbitt sees that creative imitation is fundamentally an effort of the will, and that what we mainly suffer from today is "a subtle psychic indolence." We are averse to the "spiritual strenuousness" required for a rediscovery and reapplication of the universal. We are apt to resent the very idea of a universal will or self if it is conceived as "an inner principle" of control *set above* our temperamental selves" and demanding from us a certain self-limitation, concentration, and even renunciation. We protect ourselves against that idea by regarding it as outworn and negative instead of life-giving and life-renewing. Hence modern man has tended to lose entirely the belief that "there is an immortal essence presiding like a king over his appetites" (quoted by Mr. Babbitt with high approval from Walter Lippmann).

Well, how may our faith in that immortal essence be revived? In two ways, according to Mr. Babbitt. (1) Through "dogmatic and revealed religion"—which, however, has become impossible for many modern persons, including Mr. Babbitt. (2) Through a reassertion of "the higher will" on purely experiential grounds, apart from theism and all other religious dogmas. This way requires a critical restudy of the great saints and sages of all dispensations. Their common moral essence must be extracted from its diverse imaginative embodiments and reaffirmed in modern psychologic form. . . Now, Mr. Babbitt clearly regards Way (1) as more or less superstitious. Yet he has no quarrel with it; in fact, he is here guilty of "hitting soft." For he sees that Way (1) can mean a rich exercise of the imagination under guidance of sound moral principles. On the other hand, Way (2), though very valuable in other respects, seems to me depressing and even disrup-

BOOK PLATE BY ALBERT SCHILLER.
Composed entirely of Type Ornaments.

tive for the human imagination—which cannot live by vitamines alone. And how can there be any real *imaginational* communion between the devotees of Way (1) and of Way (2)? Yet this book calls for a full reintegration of the imagination. Such is the paradox.

The present sick state of the imagination would seem to require, primarily, the revival of certain great images (or types of image) which in the past have embodied the "human universal." At the same time those images must be subjected to a severe criticism, esthetic as well as moral, which will prevent their regaining their old superstitious fixity and enable them to blend with whatever is valid in modern experience. Surely this is the normal way of imaginative revival, of creative imitation,—as exemplified, for instance in the Renaissance. It is a *via media* more fully human than the two ways envisaged by Mr. Babbitt. He is too absolute in his categories. Nevertheless his book is timely, powerful, and interesting. A deep vein of meditation goes through it, and its pages are alive with swift and witty reflections ranging all the way from Confucius and the old East to Theodore Dreiser and the new West. The central chapter, on "Coleridge and the Imagination," takes its place unmistakably among the few best critical essays in our language.

Dangerous Diaries

SIR WILLIAM BATTEN, Sir William Penn,
And Sir John Minnes were Navy men.
They had chicken-livers and pasty faces,
And their principal interest was their places.
Their intellects resembled a sheep's,
And they were detested by Samuel Pepys,
Who set it down as one in the face of God
In the time of the second Charles by the grace of God.
Sir William Batten no doubt was shady.
His wife wasn't pleasant to Pepys's Lady.
Sir William Penn, though his son turned Quaker,
After all had taken Jamaica.
And Sir John Minnes, though he wasn't able,
Was excellent company at table.
There is a question which gives me the creeps:
Am I acquainted with Samuel Pepys?
That chap I beat in a lawsuit recently,
Is he handling my character rather indecently?
Hitting me off in phrases too fiery
For my satisfaction in some damned diary?
I can see his pen on the white page flickering:
"Bacon was there. Hence the usual bickering.
"It's perfectly clear that he thinks he's funny,
"But if he's amusing, then I'm Gene Tunney."
With the further addition nothing can soften,
"Why does he come to the club so often?"
Is he writing this moment exact and fierce?
Does his sledge batter, his rapier pierce?
Can you feel the edge of his scimetar?
He sees us not as we think we are.
We may be a good deal better perhaps.
We may, in fact, be excellent chaps.
He may not reach our heights and our deeps—
But he sees what he sees. What we sow he reaps.
And he states the opinion of Samuel Pepys.

LEONARD BACON.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

ADVENTURES OF A NOVELIST. By GERTRUDE ATHERTON. *Liveright.*
An autobiography of literary adventures and wide personal contacts.

AS I SEE RELIGION. By HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK. *Harper.*
Interesting and characteristic utterances on the subject described in the title.

SUMMER HOLIDAY. By SHEILA KAYE-SMITH. *Harper.*
An intimate and humorous study of two English children, with evident autobiographical reference.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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The BOWLING GREEN

A Passing Stranger

Lat. 51° 14′ N., Long. 10° 50′ W.

(From our Special Correspondent)

[Editor's Note: We have received another travel-serial from our egregious envoy, who enjoyed his first voyage so much that he made another immediately. We print the concluding portion first as it is of News Value.]

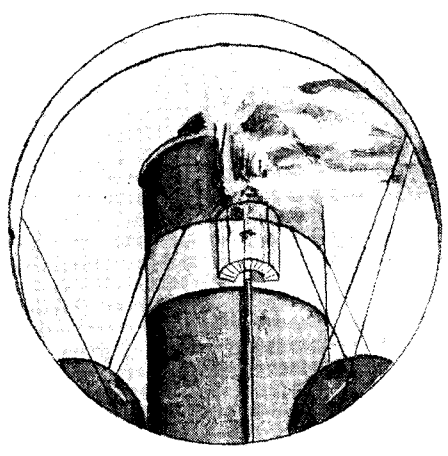
S. S. *President Roosevelt*
Westward Bound, May 1932

I BOARDED the ship at 7 P. M. leisurely enough as we weren't to leave until 4 A. M. The trip from the Hamburg office of the U. S. Lines took us, by bus, through the whole network of Hamburg-American docks before we reached our ship. I was depressed, as I had been in Bremerhaven, to see the enormous fleet of still ships. With nothing to be done about it.

About 9 A. M. we approached Cuxhaven. A German naval tug came alongside and warned us of target practice, telling us where to stop. I think we would have stopped without the tug, for ten minutes later I heard it. Firing with a vengeance. Then we saw the target—a big plane towing a scarlet sausage. They were trying to hit the sausage, with shrapnel. I hadn't seen the range finding shots but the fourth attempt sent the balloon swinging crazily into the water. The plane continued on, released another target and wheeled back in our direction. No sooner had it turned than the first puff of white cloud appeared, then a flash which we heard almost at once; then, seconds later, the original report. They were firing over our heads from a great distance, well out of our sight anyway. I hoped there wouldn't be any mistakes in calculation, windage, etc. I remembered what H. M. Tomlinson had told me about shrapnel.

The plane, an alternate cross of black or silver, as the sun struck it, speeding a hundred miles an hour. The white puffs relentlessly nearer each time. The target suffering, at the seventh or eighth shot, a purely mathematical death.

We enjoyed a nice thick fog on the way to Southampton and my cabin being on the main deck forward and facing aft, I got an earful that night of the whistle. Could hear, too, the call of the other ships in the channel, all calling in reverse—*don't come, keep away.*



Our small intimate group from Hamburg cast a critical eye over the Southampton passengers (on tenders *Flying Kestrel* and *Albert Edward*) to see if any looked interesting. Some did. So did some of the Cherbourg crowd, later in the day. We made for Cobh.

I had my first sight of Ireland about 2 P. M. We entered Cobh harbor about 3. The gulls, our escort, settled down on the water, nose to the wind and held their positions by vigorous paddling against the stiff breeze. I looked in vain for the wreck of the *Celtic* on the Cow and Calf rocks which you had warned me about. I found later she'd been blown up. *Celtic* was so close to the lighthouse as to hide the light with her funnels.

The tender *Fáilte* brought passengers and a dozen peddlers who spread their wares on the promenade deck. Linens, shawls, blackthorn sticks; I made a small purchase just to hear Irish plain. We weighed anchor and turned out to sea with me hanging over the rail trying to watch the passing green panorama, and the pilot's boat. This tiny affair, right under me, was being towed as we proceeded down the bay half speed. Halfspeed for us, full speed for them. I took a quick look at the bridge for a life-belt as I expected to be tossing it over any minute, but the pilot tumbled in most casually, the line was dropped and they pulled away free and clear.

Friday the thirteenth and the next stop New York, one week's time. Now we were off. I started my usual tour of inspection. *Pres. Roosevelt* rates 13,869 tons, twin-screw, oil-burner. She carries cabin passengers and third class. Forward and aft of the superstructure she carries gear new to me but which I'd noticed on Dollar line ships and the American Banker, trader class. This rigging supports the batteries of booms for quick loading of the seven hatches. Two new words for my naval nomenclature—the uprights are "king-posts," the crosspieces "gantries." They are simply steel girders and I had to be with them a few days before I felt at home. The masts are supported by structures 2 and 4, and never reach the deck, starting up from the gantry. I can almost imagine that these rigid oblongs help her stability for I never saw a ship ride a sea better. Tuesday the sea was heavy rough and while we dug our nose down once in a while there was never a worth while roll.

A series of tributes to Capt. Fried and the crew of the ship for the *Antinöe* rescue, are distributed in unobtrusive places on B deck. I liked especially Sir Esmé Howard's letter:—"His Majesty's Government have been particularly impressed" etc. Also the small bronze plaque of the St. George's Society.

To Commemorate the Heroism of
Capt. George Fried, Officers and Crew
of this Ship
who during a four days hurricane in mid-Atlantic, saved the entire crew of twenty-five British seamen from the sinking Freighter Antinöe
January 24 to 28, 1926

We were sitting, a small group, in the smoking room Friday night. It was blowing hard; one of the passengers late from Burma, was telling animal stories. A little after ten a passenger ran through the room shouting "A plane is down right near us." We rushed out and forward. Off our starboard bow I saw a light on the water; a flare and life-belt. Most of the passengers were on the other rail, peering into the dark. I finally made out a faint, bobbing gray blur; the ship was swinging round. Then the searchlight found it and in a bright circle we saw a small white figure, sitting atop a plane. The tail was in the air, well out of water, the nose out of sight, the wings partly submerged, in and out of the waves. A boat was already down and on the way. The plane was about two hundred yards from the ship and we could plainly see the still figure, waiting. The boat came up close, backed away and closed in back of the wing—seemingly very simple, but a handsome manœuver. I could see even from my place the danger of the wings. A touch of them under the boat and over she'd go. In the meantime we were closing up. The rescued man jumped into the boat, never even, as I learned later, getting his feet wet. A line was secured to the plane and the boat headed for the brightly lit ladder down our port side, well aft. It wasn't much of a pull, for ship and plane had been drifting toward each other. A line was thrown round the stranger's waist (none of us had the slightest idea who he was, nor where he'd come from) and up the ladder he came, sure-footed but slow. In the glare of the lights it made a dramatic picture as he climbed the rail and felt the deck, his head literally bloody but unbowed. In the meantime an effort was made to save the plane, but the danger was too great and, the last man of the boat's crew safe on deck, it too was cast adrift. Too much sea to risk getting her up. The rescued man was bundled into the ship's hospital and I saw no more of him until Sunday morning, when he came into the dining room for breakfast. I have learned in the meantime he was Lou Reichers, that he'd hopped off from Harbor Grace at 11 A. M. Friday morning. We had picked him up just 47 miles off the Irish coast at Fastnet. And so as I saw him walk in erect, head up, I felt a lump in my throat. What a brave effort, and the pity of it, to come so close and miss. But he had found his one crowded hour of glorious life, while the rest of us were still searching for it.

Thursday. Last day at sea. From a card on the bulletin board I notice "This ship is expected to dock at Pier 59 Friday at about 2.30 P. M." I like the flexibility of "expected" and "about." I hope we're late for I'll hate to get off. The Captain's Dinner was last night and the subsequent celebrations lasted well into the morning. Yes, there's a bar on board—a dispensing sort of bar, too small to stand up to but radiating refreshments to all corners of the ship.

It was in the Captain's cabin that I learned what king-posts and gantries are. And while there I saw a grand old lithograph—the Schooner Yacht *America*, 170 tons, etc., published by Ackerman, London, 1851. Artist and lithographer, Thomas G. Dutton. These skippers! Commodore Randall on the *Leviathan* had knocked me off my pins with his Currier & Ives and Rowlandsons. Capt. Fried let me take a long look, a longing look at *America*, then he opened a closet door and showed me a spinning wheel he'd found in Hamburg. A perfectly sound, polished mahogany spinning wheel. I spun the wheel.

For a few days Reichers, his face patched and bandaged, stayed in or about the hospital under care of the Ship's Doctor, Mr. Mulligan. He seemed to be more depressed at having just missed his goal than elated at having been picked up. But his face has healed and his spirits. He wants to try it all over again. I have been fortunate in forming one of a small informal group which includes Reichers and meets more or less irregularly until after dinner when we gather in earnest in the smoking room.

You will have read the press reports of Reicher's flight long before this, but his first telling the story was thrilling. I had not seen the plane until after it hit the water (hitting it as one of the crew said—"like a ton of bricks"). All I know about planes is how to gaze at them, but making any landing on the waves that black night had to be neat, without going through to the bottom.

Reichers frankly admits he was lost. He had been travelling at high speed, his Lockheed plane *Liberty* averaging about 225 miles per hour. He had been between ten and fifteen thousand feet up all the way, over the clouds and unconscious of the north wind pushing him south. When having made the mileage sufficient to have brought him within sight of land he knew something was wrong.

He cruised north, then south but saw no lights. Nothing but fog. His gas was almost gone. Then he spotted us. He made one circuit of the ship, was seen at once and signalled to, with the whistle. Then he came down. Lots of spray. Then he waited, as he thought "hours." In the meantime the bridge was concerned with how long he would float.

A copy of *Passing Strangers*, by Felix Riesenberg, which a passenger had on board, was handed to the Captain with, roughly, the following inscription: "For Capt. George Fried, who at 10.20 P. M., Friday May 13, 1932, sighted a Passing Stranger. *Lat.* 51°, 14′ N, *Long.* 10°, 50′ W, and at 10.55 had him safe on board. Signed, Lou Reichers, Passing Stranger."

And into my sentimental library goes a blue booklet—the passenger list for this trip. The last entry under "Additional Passengers" reads *Mr. Lou Reichers, Aviator.* We had them by lunch time Saturday; and I have one for you, kindness of Mr. Raymond, Purser.

Items which may have eluded the Press: Capt. Fried, after greeting Mr. Reichers on board, "Well, son, it's going to take you a week to get back where you left this morning."

Later the Captain accused Reichers of being a hitch-hiker and claimed he distinctly saw him through his glass, beckoning inquisitively with his thumb in the direction of New York.

This, incidentally, is Reicher's maiden voyage on an ocean liner. And he confessed to more nervousness on entering the dining-room than hopping off at Harbor Grace.

Bugle for dinner, and this is one ship where you rush to meals—rush casually without seeming to. Hope other ships won't get sore, but never had such excellent food on the water. A real sacrifice to leave some for the sea gulls, as is my custom. I told the steward, a Swiss, right at the beginning that eating always in speakeasys, as I do, I knew all about food and cooking; also not to wave menus at me but just bring it on in order.

Beginning to feel bad about ending the trip. No offense meant to New York. I hear the ship is to make week-end cruises to Norfolk soon. I want to introduce you to Capt. Fried and his silent First Officer, Mr. Manning (who handled the boat which lifted Reichers back into circulation). I want to show you a ship smart as a flagship of the navy. I want to show you a *King Post* and a *gantry.*

Friday, May 20. At 11:17 P. M. last night we ran out of beer. Our emotions were evenly divided between elation at the fact and just pure shame.

A lovely little blond creature boarded the ship at Cherbourg. She was more than Parisienne, she was Paris itself. Grim disapproval on the part of the lady passengers; consternation even among the brunettes. For the men, she quickly and effectively disposed of the four or five over-bold cavaliers who attempted too rapid acquaintance. They ever after, I noticed, kept well clear of her. With four others, of whom she better approved, she employed an amusing technique.To each she slipped furtively a plaintive note in French with appended rough translation in English, to the effect that the accumulated attentions of the *others* were boring her to death, and that he—the reader of the note—was the only one she cared anything about. These cute *billets-doux* were effective in creating first a coolness, then a definite dislike among the four happy horsemen. The whole grand structure came down, however, with a sudden crash when, seated one evening in the smoking-room, one of the lovers, a bit gone in his cups, produced *his* little note with the query: "Can any one tell me what the hell this says?" "Well," said another, "it probably says just what this one does," tossing his on the table. I'm keeping mine; I'm proud of it—it's a line longer than any of the others.

W. S. H.

Cobh

An excellent title for a collection of specimens of modern satiric verse, from 1914 to 1931, has been chosen by Sherard Vines to ornament his volume recently published in England by Wishart. It is "Whips and Scorpions," and among the thirty-five poets who contribute to the collection may be mentioned the names of Aldington, Roy Campbell, T. S. Eliot, Sassoon, Aldous Huxley, and Osbert Sitwell.

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SCIENCE AND FAITH

Contemporary Physics

SCIENCE AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE. HERBERT DINGLE. The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

By F. S. C. NORTHROP.

RECENT developments in physics have presented difficulties for those who believe that the truth is revealed in common sense. The relativity of space and time, the extremely mathematical character of the foundations of physics, the breakdown even of the space-time concepts of the relativity theory when we consider atomic phenomena—these and many other factors make it hard to defend the thesis that he is most intelligent who keeps his feet on the ground. With both the feet and the ground conceived as world lines and groups of wave pockets this dictum ceases to give much assurance to the man in the street.

It was natural that such a state of affairs should put a strain on British mentality. The Germans with their Naturphilosophie of Schelling and Hegel obviously possess a capacity for the unexpected and fantastic, and the French have always been famous for their rationalism, but with the British the case is different. In philosophy the word "British" and the word "empiricism" go together, and in popular psychology the avoidance of extremes and an instinct for compromise constitute the first principles of conduct. The Britisher, it is said, "muddles through."

This faith of the Englishman in common sense and the middle path is delightfully illustrated by a story of the eighteenth century. It seems that the proposal had been made to place lightning rods upon the Houses of Parliament. Whereupon an extreme nationalist arose and opposed the measure on the ground that lightning rods "were invented by that rebel Franklin." So heated did the debate become that the President of the Royal Society resigned his position in that learned body in order to defend the utility of these crude conductors of electricity. In the end, however, the Englishman is said to have shown his usual genius for compromise by erecting the lightning rods and placing knobs at their tips, thereby rendering them useless.

Obviously something interesting must happen when such a mentality is confronted by the theories of contemporary physics. There have been roughly three reactions. The first exhibited itself in the philosophy of Whitehead. Confronted by discoveries which had cut to the foundations of traditional scientific theory, and sufficiently aware of the philosophical traditional to sense the significance and seriousness of the issues raised he turned quickly from the technical concepts of physics to immediate sensation where he proceeded, following in the footsteps of Locke, Berkeley and Hume, to prosecute a new description of the deliverances of sense awareness. This return to immediate awareness is characteristically British in its philosophical emphasis and constitutes the most profound and critical English response to current physics.

The second reaction exhibits itself in the books of Eddington and Jeans. Primarily scientists, they have not subjected the findings of physics to a critical logical and philosophical analysis. Nothing remained, therefore, but for them to take current scientific concepts literally and more or less at their apparent value. Here reconciliation with common sense is difficult to achieve. Thus cut off from the instincts of their people, it is natural that Eddington and Jeans go to extremes. The usual British sense of balance is no longer present to soften or modify their doctrines. The result has been that interesting suggestions of current physical theory have been generalized into philosophical doctrines which are most stimulating to the imagination. The stolid Englishman thus broken from his mooring is seen soaring not merely in the thin air of distant space but in the unimaginable theological regions of worlds other than this one. The critical reader may say that Eddington and Jeans prove the invalidity of our analysis of British mentality. I find my answer to this charge in the remarks of another Englishman, Mr. Keynes, concerning England and the gold standard. In the Spring number of the *Yale Review* he states in truly British fashion that it is not the pound which has gone off the gold standard, but gold, because of its crazy antics in comparison with stable British currency, which has gone off the pound sterling. Similarly it is not Mr. Jeans and Mr. Eddington who have failed to keep their feet on the ground, but the ground which has slipped away from them. In short, science has run away from common sense. Such at least is the way it must appear to one who knows his physics and proceeds to interpret it more or less at its face value without further logical and philosophical analysis.

But it is inevitable that there should be a reaction to Mr. Eddington and Mr. Jeans even within physics. Even contemporary physics cannot shatter the instinct for common sense of all British physicists. This brings us to Mr. Dingle and his book, "Science and Human Experience." The title suggests the emphasis. It is not in its relation to some other world but in its intimate connection with human beings that the meaning for science is to be found and appraised. But this is not all. The initial and fundamental theme of the book is its definition of science. Note the wording: "Science" is that among many intellectual attitudes toward "our experience taken as a whole," which "selects its field as that of the experiences which are common to all normal people." Similarly the book closes with a chapter on science and art and another on science and religion, and here again what distinguishes science from either art or religion is the distinction between experiences which are "common" and those which are "individual." But the climax is reached in the treatment of the scientific theories themselves. After four chapters in which most elementary accounts of the origin of physics with Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton, and the significance of relativity and quantum theory are given, Mr. Dingle comes to the main point. It appears in the title of Chapter V: "The Common Sense of It All." Here Mr. Jeans and Mr. Eddington are with propriety criticized and, more important, the English physicist gets his feet back on the ground.

All of which goes to show that Mr. Dingle's book is good British doctrine. The question arises, however, concerning whether it is good contemporary science. To leave the matter thus would be in a sense unfair to Mr. Dingle, for we have not considered the specific considerations which dictate his disagreement from Eddington and Jeans and his own positive conclusion. But in another and more fundamental sense it would be profoundly fair, for if common sense and the relation of science to human experience are to be the basis for determining the meaning of physics and its relation to art and religion, then nothing could be more just than to say that Mr. Dingle's thesis is a beautiful expression of British mentality, and a questionable theory of the meaning of contemporary physics, since judged by common sense and his own standards this, as we have indicated, is precisely what it appears to be. In this fashion the humanistic common sense philosophy of science condemns itself.

The inherent weakness of this doctrine exhibits itself in Mr. Dingle's definition of science as "the intellectual attitude" which "selects its field as that of the experiences which are common to all normal people." But who are the "normal people"? Here we either resort to a majority vote, in which case the experience of witches would have been science at one time in Western history, or we fall into the circular fallacy of regarding as normal those people who accept "accepted" scientific theory, or else we admit that science has no more connection with the "common experience of normal people" than the circumstance that the majority of people in a community eventually come to accept those doctrines which are established by their intellectual peers on quite other grounds. What Mr. Dingle overlooks in his definition of science is that the "common" experience of "normal" people is as a rule not something immediately given, but is instead a function of those phases of possible human experience in a given age selected as important, and that this in turn is a function of the philosophy of the period, which varies with changes in the more technical scientific information. Thus it would be more correct to define the "common experience of normal people" in terms of the science of a previous decade or century, than to define science in terms of common experience.

If, as was the case in the Middle Ages, theological doctrines seem most firmly and universally grounded in experience, then the "common experience of normal people" is theological in its emphasis; if, as has tended to be the case since Galileo and Newton, physical and this-worldly categories dominate scientific and popular philosophical thought, then the world of physics tends to be regarded as the "common" part of human experience, and religion and theology and are are considered, as Mr. Dingle tends to treat them, as individual idiosyncrasies.

If these considerations are too general, then consider technical physics itself. Take the notion of time. In immediate experience the temporal relations of two events far apart is one thing for one person in one position and another thing for another person at a different distance from them; it is one thing if the events are seen, a quite different experience if they are heard. For example, the blowing of two whistles may be simultaneous as seen and not simultaneous as heard, and if the events are seen simultaneously by a person equidistant from both, they will not be seen to be simultaneous by a person who is not equidistant. In short, in the field of immediate experience the notion of time is an individual and not a common experience. Yet time is treated in physics. If Mr. Dingle's definition of science is correct, this is difficult to understand. Moreover, physics has a common time for different persons and places providing the persons and places are at rest relatively to each other. The point is, however, that the time of physics which is a common time for normal human beings is not the time of immediate experience but the time of conceptual physical theory. As Einstein pointed out in explaining the special theory of relativity, we cannot get the public time of ordinary human intercourse or the time of either Newtonian or relativity physics without the notion of the simultaneity of events that are separated in space, and this notion is not given intuitively in experience but depends instead upon a definition in terms of light propagation which in turn involves the conception of immediately experienced events as physical happenings that are connected to the physical body of the observer by physical propagation which in turn is not immediately perceived. It becomes evident, therefore, if Mr. Dingle's definition of science is correct, that time should not be a concept in physics, since there is no immediately experienced simultaneity of spatially separated events which is the same for or "common" to all normal people. On the other hand, the presence in physics of a "common" time known by reason indicates that science defines the common portion of human thought concerning nature, and not that common human experience defines science. This being the case, an appeal to common sense or to the "common experience of normal individuals," as if it were something immediately given and prior to all theory, is not a sound basis for determining the philosophical meaning and significance of contemporary physics. Common sense in physics as elsewhere depends on what is initially uncommon sense.

So much for the intrinsic merits of Mr. Dingle's main contention. Nevertheless there can be little doubt that many of his criticisms of Eddington and Jeans are valid. It must be maintained, however, that when this is the case it is for reasons other than those arising out of the general definition of science which he gives. As an antidote to Eddington and Jeans, Dingle's "Science and Human Experience" is to be recommended, but for a more decisive determination of the meaning of contemporary scientific discoveries, a more logical and philosophical analysis of the scientific theories themselves is to be advised.

Aggressive Religion

WINNING WAYS FOR WORKING CHURCHES. By ROY L. SMITH. New York: The Abingdon Press. 1932. $2.

CONFIDENT FAITH. By SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER, JR. New York: Fleming Revell Company. 1932. $1.50.

Reviewed by P. W. WILSON

IN these books, we have contrasting expressions of what has been called an aggressive Christianity. They lead us from the outer courts of the Temple where all is activity into the Holy of Holies where dwells the inner mystery.

Like the Catholics of the middle ages, the Moslems in Mecca, and the Hindus of Benares, Mr .Smith, who happens to be a Methodist, sees society as an organism in which the spiritual should pervade the secular. The Church of the twentieth century should be no less inclusive of citizens than the state. To subject the community to what in colleges is known as compulsory chapel, is no longer possible. There must be what Mr. Smith calls "salesmanship," and the value of this book lies in the truly amazing enumeration of all the ingenious artifices whereby churches maintain and increase membership and attendance at public worship.

We read of "telephone brigades" and "come-back campaigns." In Texas, there is "a hunting and fishing month," and elsewhere "the Lonely Ladies League reports some wonderfully good times." Nor must we overlook the Sunshine Circle, the Kandy Klub, or the horse show where colts are trained for competition. We note:

> "George's Funeral" was the title of a service held by one group of young people. So many people said, "Let George do it," that the poor fellow died of overwork and his funeral was held. The reading of his will assigned his tasks to other people still living.

Such churches have little to learn from the advertiser nor are their methods to be dismissed with a smile. A Methodist superintendent of schools in Ohio recently declared that "the average intelligence" of the people is "that of a sixth grade child." It is to the average intelligence, whatever it be, that the average church, like the average movie house or the average politician, has to appeal.

Mr. Shoemaker stands within the sanctuary. What he faces is the actual congregation and he realizes that merely to fill a church is not enough. These sermons preached by Mr. Shoemaker in Calvary Church, New York, are an eloquent—some would add, a singularly persuasive appeal—for a personal faith. The appeal is intimate. It is addressed direct to the individual. But it is not merely an appeal to the emotion. It is a genuine endeavor to eliminate cynicism and discouragement.

For some years, there has been discussion of "the groups" or First Century Christian Fellowship associated with the name of Dr. Buchman. Of this latest Oxford Movement, Mr. Shoemaker is an outstanding leader, and this volume offers an excellent idea of what is implied in the restatement of an old evangel. There is little dependence on creed or form. The use of the Bible is expository, and little is said to which—let us say—Mahatma Gandhi would take exception. Mr. Shoemaker would explain his position by stating, simply, that he preaches Christ. "I have repeatedly seen," says he, "Jesus work in present day men and women as true miracles as ever He worked when water was turned to wine." Possibly, the message, with its insistence on the silent hour might be described as Quakerism within non-Quaker churches, with a confessional added. "I am an amazingly happy person," declares Mr. Shoemaker and this impression is conveyed in his preaching. For those who can use it, happiness in these days is a powerful argument for any point of view.

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Points of View

A Regionalist

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I was interested in the *S. R.* editorial, April 16, with quotations from the writings of A. B. Meek, the Alabama amateur writer of pre-Civil War days. In spite, however, of the cited title, "Americanism in Literature," Meek was primarily interested in regionalism rather than nationalism in literature. If he wished American literature to be American, not European, he wished Southern literature to be Southern, not an imitation of New England. He believed strongly in the use of local themes and hoped that the different states, with their capitals, would furnish as many separate literary centers. The preface to his "Songs and Poems of the South" (Mobile, 1857) opens with these words:

> The Poetry of a country should be a faithful expression of its physical and moral characteristics. The imagery, at least, should be drawn from the indigenous objects of the region, and the sentiments be such as naturally arise under the influence of its climate, its institutions, habits of life, and social condition. Verse, so fashioned and colored, is as much the genuine product and growth of a Land, as its trees or flowers. It partakes of the raciness of the soil. . . . The Scenery infuses itself into the Song. . . .

A lover of life and leisure, Meek found literature to be its own reward. Were he living today, he might be a member of the group of Southern traditionalists who wrote "I'll Take My Stand."

H. CLARENCE NIXON.

New Orleans.

The Names of Rivers

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Dear Sir:

On page 570 in your column of questions and answers you give the river of Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin" as "the Weser River." Ungrammatical; and misquotation of Browning, who wrote "the river Weser, deep and wide" when metrically he could have written "the Weser River" if he had had such criminal tendencies.

In the names of rivers known before Columbus, "river" precedes the name and takes small r, because "river" is not part of the name: the Tiber or the river Tiber, not the Tiber River; similarly the river Dee, the river Nile, etc. In the names of rivers discovered since Columbus, the general rule is that "River" follows the name and is capitalized, because in so many cases the name consists of the word "River" preceded by a modifier (the Red River, the James River, the Mohawk River, which is not the river named Mohawk but the river of the Mohawks). In the greatest of the newer rivers, and in such as have nothing English about their name or neighborhood, there is more or less option to treat them either way.

I have a high-grade British atlas which makes the grammar follow the flag, so that the same stream is "the river Yukon" in the Canadian part of its course and "the Yukon River" in the Alaskan part of the same map. This is an error: the principle, and the reason for it, are the same for Canada as for the United States.

American maps and schoolbooks are very incorrect in this matter.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON.

Ballard Vale, Mass.

"Disciple" vs. "Pupil"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Dear Sir:

In Frank Lloyd Wright's review of my book "The Frozen Fountain" published in the May 21st number of your journal I received as favorable and as fair a treatment as I have a right to expect from his particular hands, but he has—carelessly, no doubt—put words into my mouth which I never said, and then reproached me for saying them. I never called him a "disciple" of Sullivan, but a "pupil" which is an entirely different matter. It is exactly what he has called himself, and what Sullivan himself called him. The book contains no reference to Wright as Sullivan's "disciple," as Wright asserts that it does.

My admiration of Wright both as a force in architecture and as an architect is great. Though we differ in our point of view I am proud to call him my friend. No one understands better than I how mentally independent he was of Sullivan. It is therefore the more unpleasant and surprising to find myself blamed for something which I never said and know to be untrue.

Yours very truly,

CLAUDE BRAGDON.

Readers and Reviews

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Dear Sir:

As a subscriber and reader of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, since its inception, I have noted with interest from time to time in your periodical, comments on the functions of literary criticism. Belonging to a large group of inarticulate readers, it has occurred to me not unadvisable to let you hear from this large audience to which the critic addresses his reviews.

In this period of greatly diminished income, we book-purchasers must scan our purchases more closely, and reviews are read and carefully considered before we determine on a book purchase. In the past, I have found the book reviews and articles appearing in the *Saturday Review*, generally of great value. Yet, possibly it might not be amiss to state a few of the points, that the ordinary reader expects. Reviews failing in general to conform to the following requirements are apt to mitigate against an understanding of the work under discussion, and discourage the reader.

1. Above all, the review should be lucid. There are a few critics, among whom I would number Christopher Morley, who are clever enough to deviate from a straightforward review of the work under discussion. Such critics, however, are rare, and frequently attempted cleverness consists merely of verbal gymnastics, which leave the reader more puzzled than ever and possibly only with the general impression that the book under discussion must be woven from the same tangled web as the review. A large section of the public that reads literary criticism is seeking information and information cannot be imparted to our average intelligence by tortured attempts at verbal cleverness.

2. In reviews of works of non-fiction, it is important that the viewpoint of the author be stated. If the book be along political or economic lines, we should be advised whether the author approaches the subject as a conservative, Tory, liberal, socialist, or communist. Unbiased writers in this field are all but unknown, and the author's predilections greatly color the entire work. While it may be desirable for the public to read all sides of a public question, yet, before we buy a book we should be informed of the author's viewpoint. This question of viewpoint is also important in other fields of literature—even fiction. We may be tired of reading thinly veiled communistic propaganda, agreeing with Elmer Davis's article in the April 16th, 1932 issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

In selecting our fiction we wish to know the mood of the author, whether he be gay, gloomy, pessimistic, satiric, ironic, or what not. We desire different types of books for our own varying moods, and a word or two from a critic is of importance in this respect.

3. If the work reviewed is non-fiction, we wish to be informed as to its accuracy. We do not wish to be captious, yet naturally are interested in this most important question.

4. There are still a large number of readers, that are interested in style. Frequently, we may be induced to read a book written on an otherwise uninteresting subject, if the author knows how to write—and utilizes his knowledge. What a thrill we had reading "Green Mansions" and the "Orphan Angel," although the subject matter would not have appealed to us. And how we wondered that anyone could think it worth while to publish the tortuous sentences of "An American Tragedy," let alone recommend it, without at least advising us how poorly it is written.

5. And, of course, we wish to be informed of the subject matter. Each one has his own tastes and cannot take time to cover the entire field of literature, or even a small portion thereof. So one of the primary reasons for reading a book review is to determine the subject matter.

H. C. YOUNG.

Fargo, N. D.

Cobblestone Style

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Some time since you said in a Sermon on Style in the *Review*, "Modern English is lacking in eloquence," and "Science, having come close to metaphysics, needs a new diction." How I pricked up my ears! For five or six years I have been noticing how poor was the prevalent quality of expository writing, and asking myself would nothing ever be done about it by the critics. At last you—and who better qualified—were speaking to this point of rhetoric. "The priests of the twentieth century babble in a jargon that has lost its vitality (Cheers!) and the prophets are tongue-tied (Hear, hear!) with a language that can say everything but what they most deeply feel and mean." You were too kind. Their "language of the machine" can say scarcely anything. Surely, surely, everyone sensitive to style feels as I do, that the jargon grows steadily worse, that one is bewildered, balked, estopped by the turgid rhetoric that prevails in current American writing.

Here are a few examples—I have been collecting them for two years, and my dossier bulges with choice specimens culled from perfectly reputable publications.

> If there were a uniform condition with reference to the distribution of population it would be necessary to move forward to a recognition of the desirability of such a readjustment.

> The book provides them with a background, and an account of existing reality such as exists nowhere else in readableness, in authority of presentation, and in its underlying warning to civilization.

> The spiritual or esthetic value of the new wants is thus made subordinate to the possibility of their being filled in quantity.

When style is as bad as that we may look for the remedy on an elementary level. Your sermon plead for "a style made eloquent by spiritual power." Amen and amen. But there again it seems to me you were too kind. You were considering bad writing from the point of view of mind and soul. Considering it from the point of view of grammar I have seen one important defect to be something as simple as rough roads, and the cure something as feasible as cement.

Almost everyone who writes to inform, whether on politics, science, sociology, philosophy, or education—almost everyone nowadays overworks the noun construction. Verbal nouns, abstract nouns, noun clauses introduced by "that" and "the fact that"—these substantives are crowded so closely together that thought cannot move ahead. Sentence after sentence presents such a jam of noun constructions that the ideas are bumped to a standstill or a breakdown. While nouns are overworked, verbs—active verbs with personal subjects—are few and far between. This is the sort of thing: The cause of the deterioration in the quality of the style of the writers of America is the prevalence of their employment of the substantive and their neglect of the use of the verb. Bump, bump, bump—one verb, *is*, and twelve nouns. Cobblestone rhetoric, I call it.

⁂ ⁂

Why is there so much of it? The typewriter? German influence? The jungle of new facts in our modern world? Interesting speculations these, but I am concerned only to set forth one simple proposition—that too many substantives ruin style. Here are more examples, out of their context to be sure, but perfectly typical of what lies all about us.

> The abundance of the next ten years already had its inception in the urgent need for replenishment of automobiles and in construction and equipment wherein necessitous cessation in favor of war works had built up a voluminous peace-time demand.

> The whole question of Anglo-Egyptian relations is bound up in this difference of opinion, which may precipitate the long-expected liquidation of outstanding differences between the two governments.

> Nothing could show more graphically the remarkable gulf of separation which has sprung up under the Soviet experiment between Russia and all the other nations of the world.
> *Can a gulf spring up? Or might there be a gulf of union, perhaps?*

Mistakes like that are appallingly common. These abstract nouns are dangerous cobblestones. The famous old mixed metaphor of the Irish orator amused us in our school days,—"I smelt a rat, I saw it floating in the air, and I nipped it in the bud," but one could easily get away with this translation of it: "By my efforts I feel that fruition has been denied to the possibilities inherent in a situation whose imminence was perceptible by its suspicious redolence." That sounds quite the usual thing. An eminent philosopher perpetrated this last March—"The introduction of the idea of mutation marks nothing less than a revolution in our entire scheme of interpretation. What also is the notion of emergent evolution save recognition of the novel, unexpected, unpredictable?" Why, oh why did he not make the last noun apparition? He must be completely deaf to the music of words.

Of course, egregious blunders, tautologies, verbosities, mistakes of all kinds have always been common and will always need to be fought. And editors and readers should wake up. Cobblestone rhetoric is far too common. Perhaps my dossier of specimens should be printed as an exercise book. Translating a few passages a day is excellent training. And by way of refreshment afterwards I recommend a page or two of William James. There is a style! Even when he is defining philosophical concepts and necessarily carries a boatload of abstractions his good verbs dip and push and swing like well-handled oars.

⁂ ⁂

I have been interested to note that English writing inflicts much less suffering of the sort we are considering than does American. We all know vaguely, uneasily, but very surely that English men and women use the English language a thousand times more skilfully than we do. (Some of us even know why.) Last fall, analyzing two utterances dealing with the present crisis, the one by Walter Lippmann, the other by Ramsay MacDonald, I found that the comparison squared nicely with my grammatical theory. In 500 lines the Englishman used 2 verbal nouns, 97 nouns, 5 substantive clauses, and 41 verbs; the American had 8 verbal nouns, 117 nouns, 10 substantive clauses, and 23 verbs. Mr. MacDonald said: "Fortunately, before the crisis came the new government had launched both an economy bill and a supplementary budget, so that every one knew that the British people were determined to reduce expenditures, stop borrowing, and balance their budget on sound financial principles. That gave confidence and enabled us to meet what was in store for us." Mr. Lippmann put it thus: "We may confidently assume that the specific measures agreed upon are fully adequate to the immediate emergency providing the country believes that unity of action—unity and action—are now agreed upon." Mr. Lippmann writes vigorously, ably, often beautifully, but even with him I swear I have my quarrel just on these four rhetorical points.

So, gentlemen of the pen and typewriter, critics, philosophers and thinkers, I adjure you, purge yourselves of this plague. Pull up the cobblestones, pour in hot tar or flowing cement. There is a royal road of rhetoric. Watch yourselves constantly, rewrite firmly every sentence if necessary. Note the substantive clauses, then cast them out. Excise "the fact that," "the question whether," "the problem of." Avoid those words that end in -tion, -ity, -ment, -ness, -ance. Cut out the noun constructions that are clogging and clotting and curdling your language. Use clauses that begin with *when, if, while, so that. Use active verbs.* Verbs, if they are active, will often be figurative. So much the better for you. Much that you have been saying will remain unsaid. So much the better for us. When you really have something to say, Style may descend upon you from above.

MARJORIE TRUE GREGG.

South Tamworth, N. H.

Galsworthy's "Carmen"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In your issue of May 14th, under the heading, "Foreign Notes," there was a small item about the translation of "Carmen" by Mr. and Mrs. Galsworthy. It declared that their translation would be published in limited edition in England. I wonder if your readers may not be glad to know that it will be published in America simultaneously? The limited edition is for both England and America, and will bear the imprints of both the English and the American publishers.

HENRY HART.

Charles Scribner's Sons.

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

DIONYSUS IN HADES

FREDERICK FAUST, whose long poem, *Dionysus in Hades,* Basil Blackwell at Oxford publishes, is actually an American, and has had quite an eventful career. He has been exceedingly successful at a more commercial type of writing under noms-de-plume, which early put him far beyond the necessity of ever having to rely on daily bread-and-butter from the product of his Muse. The type of poetry he writes is about as far removed from the type of prose he writes as could well be. In poetry he is a scholarly classicist and a precise artist. A former volume of poems of his, *The Village Street,* was published some years ago by Putnam. It contained, among less notable verse, several poems quite exquisite in their reticent delicacy. Now, in his *Dionysus,* he has attempted a much more sustained work, accompanied by a gloss suggested to him by a friend. While no one can fail to recognize the dignity of this poem's conception and style, and while the Muse has been most strictly meditated in its workmanship, I have, frankly, found its sober periods hard reading. The argument begins by Dionysus and a train of the followers of Bacchus descending through the waters of Troezen into the lost world of Hades. Great figures of Greek legend are encountered there. Often the verse takes on not unsuccessfully the grand manner, but I myself, harking back for a comparison to the earlier narratives of Stephen Phillips, have found the phrase consistently less arrestings throughout. Phillips's earlier work is neglected today, yet at one time he possessed no slight genius for remarkable epithet that breathed incantation. Still, there are fine passages in Faust's poem. I shall quote one from the beginning of Part III, where, says the gloss, Dionysus "passed to the mountains of Tartarus."

Swiftly, though half unwilling, Bacchus went,
For a god's way is not like that of man,
And saw the cliffs and forelands of the van
Rise gleaming into Hades' firmament,
Black Alps that like the hard obsidian shone,
Polished by the tempest's unwearied hands;
But it was ice that overglassed the stone
And the white cataract sustained in air.
A voice of wrack out of that night of nights,
Enveloped summits vaster than the heights
Of thought, as to the entrance now he came,
Bright Dionysus, of a great ravine;
And like a heavy torrent against him streamed
The gale, yet neither storm nor cold nor dark
Withheld him, moved by the glory of a name
And by a voice not louder but more near
The heart.

An allegory of man's temporary triumph and ultimate despair runs dimly through this poem, and yet it seems to read merely as a superior sort of translation from some lost Greek fragment. Were that the truth, it would be a remarkable feat. But it is not so, and therefore remains glacidly remote from the vivid times around us. It moves to music, but the music of such verse has been encountered before, and seems to lack any power save to lull. I found it hypnotic, but with no arousing element. There seems to be no reason why the great episodes in Greek legend cannot still be revivified for purpose of modern analogy, but I am convinced that this is not the way to do it. The very choice of metre and diction are of the study, not of the free realm of the imagination. I go to such length to criticize this poem, only because I greatly respect the author's aloofness and incorruptibility in his poetry. But that is not enough. Technically he seems to lack complete equipment. When we invoke legend we must contrive to clothe it with special life and color, else the names of the gods and the heroes have but the sound of wood on wood, so old are they and so many times and variously have they been invoked. I fear that *Dionysus in Hades* is far from a success. I cannot but wonder how that startling modern poet, Roy Campbell, would have handled such a theme. For in his work exists the intense power of vision that renders of no consequence the question as to whether he deals with the immediate present or the far past.

AN IRISH POET FROM INDIA

James H. Cousins, whose selected poems, under the title of *A Wandering Harp,* are now put forth by the Roerich Museum Press of New York, has written many volumes since 1894 when he was first published in book form. He was twenty-one then, and soon he became one of the chief figures in the Irish Literary Revival. At the age of forty he went to India as journalist and educator, and in 1919-20 he was university professor of poetry in Japan. He holds a degree from the Ministry of Education in that country as their first foreign doctor of Literature. Three years ago Dr. Cousins came to America, where he has since lectured and taught. His voluminous verse, the product of many years of Celtic and of Oriental environment, has now been selected from to form one volume. It is most uneven. It has the tendency to be merely sweet and tuneful or merely traditionally exalted. There are banalities which, with the best will in the world, one can only numbly wish he had avoided. So that when one comes upon a poem like the sheerly delightful "Bubble-Blowers," it is a refreshing relief. Nor is "High or Low," the song made concerning a drunken man, at all to be despised. "Will" has bite to its stanza. "Love, the destroyer," though far from perfect as a sonnet, contains a great truth. In "Straight and Crooked" the poet perceives best what makes the true spice of life and of song. Formal hymns and odes, and lyrics in a formal manner, need a touch of real genius to give them life. Mr. Cousins indulges too much in these. He is a poet, but he is not a great or individual enough poet to achieve in such forms. He is at his best when the Celtic wildness takes him. A man of the highest ideals and a genuine love of beauty wherever found, a versifier of smooth facility, it is but seldom in this book that I find him actually arresting.

I list with brief comment the following books, as I shall not be able to accord them further mention in this department:

UNREST 1931. Edited by Jack Conroy and Ralph Cheyney. New York: Henry Harrison. A radical anthology. The better known poets in it include Witter Bynner, Arthur Davison Ficke, Sara Bard Field, Langston Hughes, Angela Morgan, Lola Ridge, E. Merrill Root, James Rorty, and Charles Erskine Scott Wood. The opening "poem" by Sherwood Anderson is simply a mass of bad prose, boringly repetitive. "If I had music in me," he remarks turbidly, "I could orchestrate this." But he can't. He simply babbles about machines. Ralph Cheyney's poem on Debs has force despite its crudity. William Ellery Leonard's "Tom Mooney," reprinted, is, of course, a notable poem. A good deal of the other verse in the volume is pretty bad. Lola Ridge's is the best of a number of poems on Sacco and Vanzetti.

8 BELLS. By John Cabbage. New York: Parnassus Press. The author went to sea at eleven, sings of sea, harbor, and river, and, in the latter part of his book, of his work with the Garbage Fleet of the Department of Street Cleaning. Cabbage is a character down in the Village, and his verse is merely a literary curiosity.

NIGHTS AND HOURS. By Reginald Pole. Los Angeles: Primavera Press. Pole was a friend at Cambridge of the late Rupert Brooke, and there he helped found the Marlowe Dramatic Society. His work in the theatre and in music is known. His poetry, I regret to say, is quite mediocre.

"THE WHITE BIRD." By Gertrude Bartlett. Macmillan. Dr. Robert Norwood, in the Introduction to this book of an American-born Canadian poet, calls her "a genuine pre-Raphaelite." However that may be, it is certain that her verse is derivative and utterly devoid of orginality.

AFTERGLOW and INTERVAL. By Adelaide Gillette. Minneapolis: Fred Totten Phelps. Two small books of small poems which are simply simple verse.

CANDLE AND FLAME. By Alexander Hynd Lindsay. Greeley, Colorado. Mr. Lindsay has been interested in linking

(*Continued on page* 775)

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Fiction

SPEAK EASILY. By CLARENCE BUDINGTON KELLAND. Harpers. 1932. $2.

Humorous writing is tricks. If you like a humorous book it is because the tricks are good tricks. Each humorist applies his own technic to these seasoned sleights-of-hand, and the man who makes them seem fresh is the man you laugh at.

Mr. Kelland presents them, in "Speak Easily," in their oldest and most familiar form. The humorous device which is the theme of his book is sure-fire, fool-proof: a pedantic professor finds himself thrown with the cream of Broadway wise-crackers; most of the laughs throughout the book lie in the discrepancy between the English and American tongues. The professor insists on calling a Tom Collins a "Thomas Collins," a speakeasy a "speak-easily." His Broadway friends easily persuade him to put on a show for them to write and act in; and here again we encounter the immemorial device of the rube who buys Brooklyn Bridge from a stranger, for the professor proceeds to rent the largest theatre in New York for a whole year, before the show has even been written. Now that is a dodge only to be respected for its gray hairs.

One more humorous device employed by Mr. Kelland should be noted, chiefly because it has been used by so many other humorists; a trick of rhythm which has been done too much and noted too little. It is a way of breaking up conversation thus: "If," said the professor, "I were to say to you"—. It must have been very catchy once; it has a sort of swing to it; but when you can find on one page—"Which," she said," "is just what he won't do." "Perhaps," said I, "that will be as well." "Ted," said Miss Peets, "you're honest." "Let us," I said, "proceed," and three other examples of the same formula, you begin to realize that no trick is a trick after it has been explained to you.

We have a right to want to be fooled. Just as we have a right to the illusion of the theatre, and would be outraged if we were forced to see the wrong side of the scenery and the man cranking down the curtain, so we have a right to be amused without seeing by just what professional legerdemain our laughter is drawn from us. "Speak Easily" works in a not sufficiently mysterious way its wonders to perform.

MINER. By F. C. BODEN. New York: Dutton. 1932. $2.50.

This is a story of life in the Derbyshire coal-mines, written by a young man who himself began life as a miner. It is a book that shows on every page a deep knowledge of its subject, and a perfect sincerity. The author has resisted the temptation to pile up an accumulation of unrelieved horrors, as was done in that extraordinary book, "The Back-to-Backs" (which, impressive and valuable as it was in its own way, probably bore somewhat the same relation to life in the mines as "The Pit and the Pendulum" to the proceedings of the Spanish Inquisition). The conditions of life described are as bad as one could well imagine at the beginning of the book, and they grow worse as it goes on, when the mines shut down or reduce wages, the men starve through a strike, and the hero is forced upon the dole, but there is no melodramatic insistence, and there is no incredible proportion of accidents. The book is relieved by many passages of somber beauty, in the rough kindness and heartbreaking endurance of the men, and the tenderness of the miners' families; there are even pictures of the naked men working in the murky shafts that delight the mind's eye while they revolt the mind. The same noble restraint characterizes the author's attitude toward the managers and mine owners. He knows that the mines do not pay; they, too, are caught in the net; he regards them in their degree with the same grave pity as the men. It is for this reason that "Miner," though not the most harrowing of the books we have read on labor conditions, is the most saddening; it is full of the dignity of despair.

With its virtues, it has some serious faults. As a story, it is not altogether well managed. The book begins with Danny, a boy of fourteen, about to begin work in the mine, and covers ten years, ending with Danny living miserable on the dole, with no hope of marrying the girl he loves or of finding any other life. Nominally, that is, it is the story of Danny, but it is valuable, not as a piece of fiction, but as an account of the miner's life; for the author's touch, so sure in describing that, often falters in his narrative. The author has published a book of poems, and he is rather a poet than a novelist. If this book has not the narrative skill and grasp of character which are the virtues of the novel, it has the ability to take life and dwell on it imaginatively and convey its emotional effect to another, which is one virtue of poetry.

DICTATOR. By GEORGE SLOCOMBE. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1932. $2.50.

The reader finds here an interesting and unusual book, but he feels also a somewhat disturbing sense of incomplete satisfaction in its perusal. Upon analysis this seems to be traceable to a divided interest in the writer's mind. He has concerned himself first with what inevitably approaches a forcible portrait of Mussolini—of his background and many of the earlier scenes and events of his familiar career; especially of the man himself—physically powerful and indefatigable, gifted as an orator, magnetic, mentally courageous. Through scenes of social unrest and revolutionary activity this figure is brought to his incongruous political position beside and yet above the king of his country. A line seems to be drawn, and the author now is interested in what might happen to such a being in such a situation if the complex currents of more human reactions should flow near and tempt him to relax in their wake. Here romance and fiction carry on, following the love story of the young Princess Elena and the Dictator. Immediately the prospect of their marriage involves political complications so serious that the Dictator's rule crashes to a sudden close, and flight—with Elena—alone remains. Further developments in his varied career as a promoter of industrial and political freedom, and finally, after Elena's tragic death, another political reversal at the close of the book, fill out an interesting story if one can read with a sufficiently flexible mental adjustment between truth and fiction. The later sections of the book are written with a lighter hand and more rapid action than the earlier; yet somehow they carry less conviction and hold less depth.

HEAD OF THE FAMILY. By *Josephine Lawrence*. Aventine. $2.

SPAWN OF THE NORTH. By *Barrett Willoughby*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

ABANDONED TRAILS. *By Nell Shipman*. Dial. $2.

IF LOVE COMES. By *Gladys Malvern*. Kendall. $2.50.

THE VILLAGE POMPADOUR. By *Joan Conquest*. Macaulay. $2.

Psychology

THE ART OF BEING A WOMAN. By OLGA KNOPF. Little, Brown. 1932. $3.

Our old enemy, the inferiority feeling, in its Adlerian setting, has been encountered once more at its nefarious work. Olga Knopf has found it to be a cause of those many irritating and dangerous traits that the uncharitable call feminine characteristics. Timidity and slyness, the scolding of the virago, the flightiness of girls, and the neurotic behavior of older women, all are discovered to have their beginning in an inferiority feeling produced in girls by the depreciatory attitude toward women that exists in many families. The feeling of inadequacy and insecurity begins insidiously in girlhood and its later results and compensatory accompaniments are evident in work and marriage.

The author, whose early training was in Vienna, draws on her own experience in gynecology and medical psychology, as well as on data provided by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Commerce, in support of her thesis that girls can escape the pattern of these personality traits and do not need to follow any chart for specifically feminine behavior. The title of the book is half satirical. "The art of being a woman" is simply a matter of possessing self-respect and self-reliance, of "being at home in the world."

The suggestion of the author that to this end women must find work outside the home (each paying another to do her work there) in itself is sufficiently paradoxical to merit consideration in our stupendous economic system. "Let's all move up one," said the Mad Hatter.

BORZOI BOOKS

A Personal Statement by Alfred A. Knopf

THE FOUNTAIN

BY CHARLES MORGAN

The Fountain has moved me more than any book I plan to publish this season. My personal enthusiasms may sometimes seem strange and even injudicious—but they are always sincere. And when I think of the esteem in which such writers as Willa Cather, Joseph Hergesheimer, Thomas Mann and Sigrid Undset are held today, I feel more confident in predicting a great future for Mr. Morgan.

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Alfred A. Knopf

I wrote the above statement last November after reading THE FOUNTAIN *in manuscript. Since then it has been chosen by "The Book Society" in England and "The Book-of-the-Month Club" in America. Over 30,000 copies have been sold of the English edition, and the first American printing consists of 55,400 copies.*

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE
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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

M. M. R., New Haven, Conn., says: "I wonder if you can give me any information as to the author and title of a little story in which is a character called 'Phoebe Snow,' a small person who always dressed in white and rode to work on a coal cart, but was never known to get soiled or mussed as a result of so doing. That is all I know about her."

SO far as I know, Phoebe never sought the seclusion of books: whenever she appeared in print it was in public and paid for. Clad in white samite, mystic, wonderful, she was the heroine of a series of picture carcards, with legends of which the first read, approximately:

Says Phoebe Snow, about to go
Upon a trip to Buffalo:
"My gown stays white, from morn till night,
Upon the Road of Anthracite."

This was the day of perfect figures, when a well-dressed woman knew that if she were comfortable at any given point, at that point her clothes were wrong. From her boned collar pressing reassuringly into the tender spots back of her ears, to the nine-gored skirt forever to be held up, Phoebe was uncomfortable, impeccable—and, oh, how white! Her picture established the reputation of what was then known as the D. L. & W.; it added another figure to our only true native mythology. I don't know when this mythic company began to gather, but the Yellow Kid and Buster Brown came in early, and it now includes Orphan Annie, the Gumps, and the current creations of radio. When the theme melody sounds for Amos 'n' Andy it says, "Once upon a time," like the recurrent phrase in the Scheherazade suite, and I come running. But Phoebe Snow lived before the radio or comic-strip continuity—before the War indeed, for patriotic soft coal killed her—when characters like this were created in advertising rhymes.

A truly catchy stanza kept the creature alive sometimes longer than the product he advertised. The Mayor of Spotless Town still has the support of Sapolio, but where is the hose-supporter immortalized in the Boston street cars by a weeping ballet-girl and the quatrain

Miranda is a girl of taste;
Her hose go right up to her waist;
And so she weeps, because, you see,
She *cannot wear the C. N. C.*

Parodists often took up the advertiser's work and carried it on free. The only Force adv. I recall is one for which the company never paid:

Jim Dumps he had a mother-in-law
Who often scolded him.
He fed her Force: she died, of course;
And now he's Sunny Jim.

Now we have slogans, short and presumably snappy. Perhaps no one would today take the trouble to memorize four lines, however lilting. But I'm convinced that most of those who were able to read street-car signs in the first decade of this century and are now reading this sentimental tribute to the Lost Phoebe (not Mr. Dreiser's) will by this time have begun to chant some old commercial strain of the period.

Continuing to speak of Phoebe, a meteor has at last struck this department, and, glancing off, made its way toward the Midwest Meteor Association of the University of Iowa. C. Edwin Hutchings, past president of Webster Archers, St. Louis, and therefore qualifying in marksmanship, reports that though O. Henry wrote no full-length novels save "Cabbages and Kings," he wrote "Phoebe," later published in the volume called "Roads of Destiny," and this story has for its climax a death caused by the fall of a small meteor.

L. F. Chapel Hill, N. C., is interested in getting some books on horseback riding and jumping, and hunting horses. The latest book on the subject, a compact, sensible all-round manual, is "A Short Cut to Good Riding," by Singerly McCartney (Duffield). There is a little book called "Riding," by Lady Hunloke and Cecil Aldin (Coward), quite the best yet for a child upon whom has been conferred the breathless boon of a pony. It tells how to feed and harness the animal, establishes a sense of enlightened responsibility, and shares all sorts of sensible advice. This is one of a series of primers of sport for quite young readers—on golf, tennis, and hunting as well—under the editorship of Cecil Aldin, whose pictures are a feature: the one on hunting is by Mr. Aldin himself and will not be too young to interest this reader.

Of the larger books, "Advanced Equitation," by J. M. T. Baretto de Souza (Dutton), is a well-recommended work, treating horsemanship in its higher ranges; it is illustrated with photographs and many drawings. "Practical Jumping," by Major Mackenzie Barrett (Scribner), is a practical treatise by a riding instructor at Sandhurst, in which a supposed pupil is taken cross-country over everything; the drawings, like the text, are spirited and inspiring. "Horse Training: out-door and high school," by E. Beudant (Scribner), came out last year; it has a preface by M. Th. Monod and an introduction by John A. Barry. Geoffrey Brooke's "The Way of a Man with a Horse" (Lippincott), a large illustrated manual of instruction, includes training and care, horsemanship, and general advice by the author, veterinary notes by A. G. Todd, and a chapter on pig-sticking, the sport known to most Americans mainly through "Bengal Lancer."

W. T. H., Denver, Colo., asks for a book with elementary experiments in chemistry within the comprehension of a ten-year-old boy. "How to Understand Chemistry," by A. Frederick Collins (Appleton), is the latest of his practical manuals; it would interest a boy to whom chemistry is fascinating, and many grown-ups are amazed when they discover how much some ten-year-old boys do know about chemistry. Of the books prepared especially for boys, there are simple experiments in Charles R. Clarke's "Boys' Book of Chemistry" (Dutton), in Mr. Collins's "The Boy Chemist" (Lothrop), whose first ten chapters make a simple course in chemistry, and in "The Boys' Playbook of Chemistry," by Raymond Francis Yates (Century), in which an "attic laboratory" is planned and put into action. One of the features of a distinctly "boys' book" on this subject is that the experiments are selected from those in which there is comparatively little danger of blowing up.

F. S. F., Clifton Springs, N. Y., is looking for good specimens of Italian and French-Canadian dialects to use as text material, and would like names of collections or individual works. "Dialects for Oral Interpretation," selected by Gertrude Johnson with introduction and notes (Century) is an excellent collection, the best of this sort that I know; it is a modern "speaker" for school or entertainment use. The best-known Italo-American speech has been set to verse by T. A. Daly, his latest volume being "McAroni Melodies" (Harcourt), in which one may find romances of courting and other complications, in a rich legato ripple. The admitted master of French-Canadian English was William H. Drummond, whose "The Habitant and Other Poems" was published with a French introduction by Putnam in 1910, but I must put in a word for Rowland Robinson, whose "Uncle Lisha's Shop" (Houghton) enshrined Ann Twine, a peerless example of a Papineau refugee settled in old Vermont.

"Bushoo, musheer," *said Lisha,* airing his French in the twilight.

"Bon soir, monsieur," politely responded Bassette, and then, with more faith in his own English, poor as it was, than in Uncle Lisha's French, good as its owner thought it: "Prob'ly you got dem boot done, Onc' Lasha, don't it? Wal, prob'ly it an't. Wal, Ah don't care, you gat heem done fore soon, prob'ly. One man tole me bear heat mos' all up your corn, Onc' Lasha, an' you goin' catch heem wid gawn. Dat so, Onc' Lasha, hein? You tink it bear, Onc' Lasha? Wal, ah guess it Ba'tlett's hol saow, me."

Robinson was able, too, to catch the delicate nuances of native North country American speech, possibly because before he began to write stories he had been for some time blind, finding his way about the countryside largely by his hearing.

T. H., New York, asks for ghost stories to take to camp. This question comes up at about this time every year. For that reason I keep to recent publications this time, rejoicing that the gathering of the incomparable ghost stories of M. R. James into an omnibus, "Collected Ghost Stories," by Longmans last Fall permits me to include it with new books. These tales have a flavor all their own. There are three big spook collections this year: "They Walk Again" (Dutton), nineteen hair-raisers of distinguished literary quality, selected by Colin de la Mare, son of the poet, who writes the introduction, and "The Supernatural Omnibus," edited with an introduction by Montague Summers (Doubleday). As might be expected with so determined a devil-chaser in command, this volume is strong on witchcraft, diabolism, sorcery, and so on; there are thirty-six stories to give one the creeps. "The Best American Mystery Stories of the Year" (Day) have been selected by Carolyn Wells, on principles explained in her introduction; this is the second of these annual collections, and there is now a companion volume appropriately called "Creeps by Night" (Day), edited by Dashiell Hammett, that takes in authors as different in method and material as Maurois, Faulkner, Irvin Cobb, and Hanns Heinz Ewers. There seems to be a slight tendency just now to complicate mystery stories with ghosts or other supernatural or at least extranatural phenomena; Eden Phillpotts's "A Clue from the Stars" (Macmillan), an unusually good murder mystery involving rural English characters, gives the tale a slight twist toward the occult, as the title indicates, and in Walter S. Masterman's "The Flying Beast" (Dutton) a lonely manor-house has its cellar full of troglodytes. I would not give them away like that had not the jacket displayed them with almost unnecessary fidelity, grabbing a lady by the neck.

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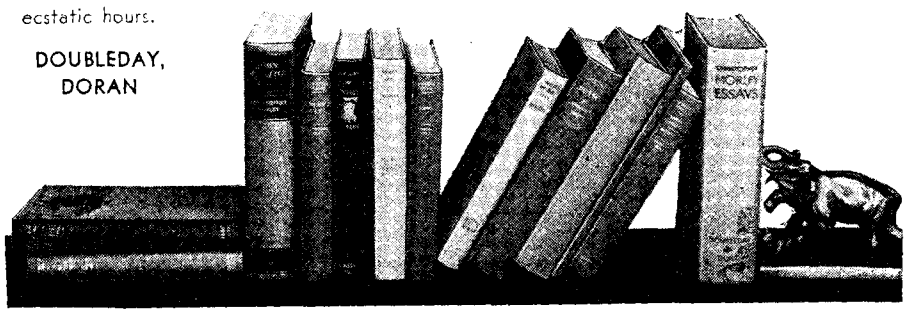

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Foreign Literature

Two German Novels

DAS WUNSCHKIND. By INA SEIDEL. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 1931.

PRINZEN, PRÄLATEN UND SANSCULOTTEN. By CLARA VIEBIG. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 1931.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

HISTORICAL fiction in Germany has been well served by women writers. Two of the chief, Ricarda Huch and Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti, were discussed in these columns some time ago, and here are two excellent historical novels from two other women writers, who, by a coincidence, have chosen approximately the same period of history and the same topography for their stories. Clara Viebig has long made the Rhine provinces her own and in her latest work it is to the principality of Coblenz-Trier, at the beginning of the French Revolution, that she brings her readers. The young Clemens Wenzelaus had just succeeded to the throne. He is idealistic, full of human sympathy, but he cannot gauge the full significance of the tremendous changes that are about to come upon Europe, nor can he succeed in preventing his territory from becoming first the refuge for the exiled French aristocracy, who bring a transitory splendor and luxury to his region, then a center of intrigue against the new régime in France, finally a corridor for the passage of the Prussian and Austrian armies and, on their collapse, a prey to the victorious invading French army, who had long prepared for their entry by espionage and propaganda. In addition to the picture which she gives of the aristocratic circle, Clara Viebig has provided an interesting sub-plot turning on the activities of one of the spies of the Revolution, who, in the guise of a coiffeur, carries on both political and amorous intrigue in Coblenz. A skilfully told story comes to an end with the blare of the "Marseillaise" and the collapse of the little world which had the Prince-Bishop of Coblenz for its centre.

Ina Seidel first attracted attention during the war, by her poems, and "Das Wunschkind" is her first large-scale piece of fiction. It is a remarkable success in the prose-epic style, extending over two substantial volumes, the interest of which hardly ever flags. It is not an historical epic, but rather the epical narration of a mother's love, devotion, and final sacrifice. But the historical background is of essential importance, for it determines the characterization and also the development of the plot to its tragic climax. The story may be briefly told. At the beginning we find the Lieutenant Hans Echter and his wife Cornelie by the bedside of their dying child. Soon after the husband goes to the war, with the Prussian troops against the French revolutionary army, and is killed. Cornelie is left a widow, and childless, but a little later she has a son whom she names Christoph. In the meantime she has left Mainz, which is occupied by the French, and learns from thence that her sister Charlotte has fallen in love with a French officer, Lieutenant Loriot, whom she marries, defying her old soldier-father, and cutting herself off from the family—all except Cornelie, who, on hearing that Charlotte is to have a child, hurries to Mainz, arriving just as the Prussian troops are retaking the city. Amid the roar of the guns Charlotte's daughter is born, but the mother dies. Cornelie thereupon adopts the little Delphine—as she is called—and brings her up with her son. Thereafter the war is not very close, and we are given the story of Cornelie's life among the Rhineland aristocracy, of the men who fall in love with her, of her conversion to Catholicism, of the boyish development of Christoph, who conceives a great admiration for Napoleon and rejoices when the Empire is proclaimed. Many of the characterizations in this part of the story are intensely vivid.

With the second volume we leave the Rhineland, and the story of the growing love between Christoph and Delphine then begins. In many ways this is the most engaging part of the whole novel—the delicate contrast between the openhearted but shy boy and the charming but capricious and variable temperament of the girl. At last Christoph declares his love. But the campaign is approaching, and he enters the army. Delphine leaves him for another lover, and Cornelie's boyish soldier-son leaves for the war, where he is fatally wounded. The end is of great and moving dignity, and fittingly closes the story of a woman's sacrifice, as seen against the vast historical background of the period from 1792 to 1813.

Round about Parnassus

(Continued from page 772)

metaphysics with poetry. His paper-bound volume treats of large subjects. The chief trouble with his work is a lack of that power over language that distinguishes the true poet.

COLOR OF STEEL. By Louise Crenshaw Ray. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. I like this book's format. The publishers call its contents "thoughtful and sincere." This is true, but despite the fact that Mrs. Ray also chooses some interesting subjects, her method of writing is essentially pedestrian and not to be distinguished from that of a great deal of the verse of the day.

ARROW UNSPENT. By Patrick D. Moreland. Dallas, Texas: Clyde C. Cockrell Co. This book won the prize in the seventh annual publication contest of the Poetry Society of Texas. Of such are competitions.

AS THEY CAME TO ME. By Elsie Stevens. Philadelphia: Poetry Publishers. The frontispiece to this book is of Elsie Stevens (Mrs. Richard Stevens). The jacket of the book bears a full length drawing of Elsie Stevens (Mrs. Richard Stevens). She wears a coronet of flowers and holds in her right hand a quill pen, in her left a book. She wrote down her verses just as they came to her!

MATE O' DREAMS and Other Poems. By Louis J. Stellman. Copyright by the author, who has also written "Port o' Gold." Titles self-explanatory.

FRIENDS OF THE ROAD. By Grace Carpenter. With foreword by the Right Reverend Arthur Selden Lloyd, D.D., Suffragan Bishop of New York. New York: Edwin S. Gorham, Inc. A little book of religious meditations and prayers. Most devout.

GLEAMS. By Edward Doyle. New York: Walter Neale. The collected poetry of a man now seventy-seven, who was stricken totally blind at the age of seventeen, and thereafter admirably earned a living in journalism and supported and raised a family. He was known to Ella Wheeler Wilcox as "the Blind Poet of Harlem." The spirit of his work is commendable, but the execution leaves a great deal to be desired.

THE DARK LAND. By Kathleen Tankersley Young. Ithaca: The Dragon Press. Miss Young has contributed to *Hound & Horn, Blues, The American Caravan,* and *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse.* I like as well as anything she has written "The Cats Walk up and Down and Cry." It is such a modern idea! But that's nothing to what the dray-horses do. They "call one to the other." I could write reams of this sort of thing in my sleep.

RED RENAISSANCE and THINKING OF RUSSIA. By H. H. Lewis. Holt, Minnesota: B. C. Hagglund. Two booklets of proletarian verse. "The working-class poets are being heard," says Jack Conroy in an introduction. But the best thing recently said anent proletarian propaganda and its relation to literature was written by Edmund Wilson in *The New Republic.* Mr. Lewis should read that article. His verse is really very bad, and my concern her with the writing of verse as an art.

The Compleat Collector

AN interesting season for rare and fine books has closed in the dullness which characterizes all business this Spring. As there will be little of note through the summer, The Compleat Collector, as a department, will be suspended until early September, and such comment by Mr. Rollins or Mr. Winterich as may be called forth by current production or current news of interest will be published in the body of the magazine.

Through the courtesy of Roger Goodland of Aspremont in France, a charter subscriber of *The Saturday Review,* a complete file of *The Saturday Review of Literature* has been presented to the British Museum.

On subjects off the Beaten Track

The Men of the Last Frontier
by "Grey Owl"
A narrative of the Canadian woods. "full of love for the wilderness and intimate acquaintance with it."—*New York Times.*
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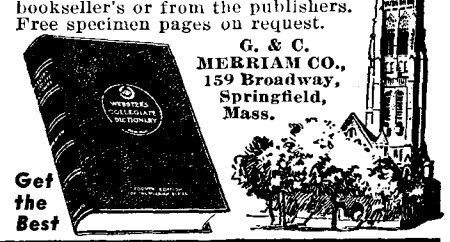
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The AMEN CORNER

How the German Republic Came Into Being
Why Germany Lost
Modern Italian Nationalism
The Negro Vote and The 'Solid' South
Music in the American Community
The Cultural Legacies of the Islamic Peoples
Sir Philip Sidney, the Perfect Flower of Elizabeth's Age
Sir Philip Sidney, Again A Prince of Glorious Legend
Shakespeare's Imagery in The Great Tragedies

"The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye,
tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of
form,
The observ'd of all observers."[1]

The other day the Oxonian was turning over a sheaf of current reviews with the object of choosing one of the many titles which offer themselves for his consideration. He was gratified to see the general recognition of the timeliness of Oxford books—their enduring qualities are, of course, proverbial. He was only pretending, however, to dally with possibilities. He really had his eye on Miss Mona Wilson's *Sir Philip Sidney.*

Sidney, that "very gentil, parfit knight,"[2] was, as Mrs. Patterson remarked last Sunday in the *Herald Tribune,* "singularly elusive"; and as she says, "Mona Wilson has done all that is possible to bring him nearer." He was probably the most accomplished and brilliant of all those accomplished and brilliant young men that Elizabeth fascinated, exasperated, tyrannized over, wheedled, bribed, or flattered for her own uses. Only Sidney eluded her and Miss Wilson's account of his career is nothing less than absorbing.

We turned at once to the contemporaneous pages of the celebrated Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, whose *Life of Sir Philip Sidney*[3] (first published in 1652) is reprinted in facsimile in the *Tudor and Stuart Library* of the Oxford Press; and to the justly celebrated *Apologie for Poetry.*[4] His songs and sonnets are among the very best in that age of exquisite sonneteers. Read them and study his life and

"Grow rich in that which never taketh
rust."[5]

Our Book-of-the-Month: SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, by Mona Wilson. $3.75.

(1) *Hamlet.* In the *Oxford Shakespeare* in one volume, $2.25. (2) Spenser: *The Faerie Queene.* 2 vols. $7.00. (3) $3.50. (4) 85c. (5) Sidney: *"Splendidis longum valedico Nugis."* No. 95 in the *Oxford Book of English Verse,* $3.75. India paper, $4.25.

The PHŒNIX NEST

IT is sad to relate
That at this late date
The Queen of Sheba we far over-rate.
She was really no beaut,
Though far from hirsute,
And Solomon wasn't so very cute.
He was more like a goat
Than a person of note,
Or thus a new novel's inclined to gloat
With German stress.
It comes—no less—
On June seventeenth from the Viking
Press.

And *Helène Eliat* is the author*ess,* we might add! Her translator is *David Zablodowsky,* while *Otto Linnekogel,*—and after all those names we collapse upon the coping!—has embellished the book with pen-and-ink drawings. Title? The work is called "Sheba Visits Solomon," and crash! goes another set of illusions. . . .

C. G. Chamberlayne of Richmond, Virginia, calls our attention to his book "Ham Chamberlayne—Virginian." Dr. Churchill G. Chamberlayne, it seems, is the headmaster of St. Christopher's School in Richmond. He has now carefully collected and annotated the papers of his father, who was a distinguished artillery officer of the Army of Northern Virginia, and also a widely known Richmond editor. All desiring this book, which should be a valuable human document on the late Civil War, should address The Dietz Press, 109 E. Cary Street, Richmond, Virginia. . . .

Groff Conklin, over on Lexington Avenue, has recently been pondering the Fall of Man, and the fruit of his speculation runs into the following verse which he sends us:

THE EVIDENCE GOES TO SHOW

Singing alone was Eve,
Wandering through the Garden
While God, the watchful warden,
In heaven to receive
Report of the planet's weav
Left Eden all alone,
And the serpent foiled hi a

The apple eaten. . . . Moan,
Ye saintly! Yet the fault was whose?
The new and innocent of head
Or the God who did abuse,
By negligence, a simple maid?

Earle F. Walbridge, librarian of the Harvard Club, noting the predilection for the work of *Thomas Lovell Beddoes* of our co-worker in another part of this journal, namely, the conductor of *Round About Parnassus,* recently wrote to him to the effect that he had just finished reading *Dorothy Sayers's* "Have—His—Carcase," in which she has made astonishingly effective use of extracts from Beddoes to give point to her chapter headings. Continues Walbridge:

> She has certainly atoned handsomely for "Suspicious Characters" (*anglice* "The Five Red Herrings") which is the most exasperating mystery novel, bar none, that I have ever read.

The Fifth Annual Contest of the International Mark Twain Society will be for the best letter of approximately a thousand words on the subject, "What I Consider the Most Representative American Novel from 1900 to 1931 Inclusive, and Why." The letters will be judged on three points: the reasons given, the literary quality of the letter, and the novel chosen. The best letter will receive twenty dollars, and the three next best a book. The judges will be *Hamlin Garland, Temple Bailey,* and *Joseph Hergesheimer.* All contributions must reach The International Mark Twain Society, Webster Groves, Missouri, by August fifteenth. . . .

We wish to announce also that a new magazine of the "advance guard" is to be started in Philadelphia. It desires short stories, poetry, and one-act plays. All one-acters published will also be produced by the Drama Guild of Philadelphia. MS. is desired that expresses the "reaction" of the individual to the contemporary industrial world—no moralizing or propagandizing. Address: *J. B. Hoptner, Cataract,* 324 South 7th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We do not vouch for this magazine but simply pass the announcement on to you. . . .

Dr. Robert T. Morris, from Merribrooke Farm, Stamford, Connecticut, writes us:

> Page 752 of May 21st *Review*—apropos of
>
> *And Goldsmith really to our sorra,*
> *Pronounced Niagara, Niagára,"*
>
> this looks as though the Indians had learned the pronunciation from Goldsmith (or was it the other way?). Furthermore, they make "*i*" short into the bargain—thereby allowing a euphonious word to run trippingly from the tongue. I would have a lot more *sorra* if Goldsmith had chosen the New England pronunciation (outside of Williamstown) which is delivered painfully through the nose as "nighaggry" with a long "*i.*"
>
> P. S.—In modern Ojibway "Niâkára" might be freely translated as "The Waterfall - that - causes - women - to-exclaim 'Gosh!' "

We have just scanned an interesting document, same being a copy of the Official Tourist Guide prepared by the tourist commission of which *Facunda E. Bacardi* is president. It is accompanied by a most estimable little booklet, "Bacardi and Its Many Uses." The best kind of tourist guide we know! The whole business naturally hails from Santiago de Cuba, where a man can raise—something beside whiskers. . . .

Niña Jay Dusenberry writes:

> Dear Old Phœnix:
>
> Your preoccupation with the animal kingdom these days prompts me to pass along to you my amusement at these hossy pedigrees I've noted while studying up hot paddock tips from Jamaica:
>
> Croyden: by Peter Pan out of Ruth Law.
>
> Etcetera: by Prince of Wales out of Melting Star.
>
> Apprentice: by Vulcan out of T[illegible]-er's Pet.
>
> Lucky Jack: by John P. Grier out of Manicure Maid.
>
> Help me: by Blazes out of Poor Butterfly.
>
> Repaid: by Kai-Sang out of Granny.
>
> Earfull: by Gnome out of Widow Bedotte.
>
> Pardee: by Sir Galahad III out of Medora II.

During the summer months the Whitney Museum of American Art, at ten West Eighth Street, will show a selection of paintings, drawings, and prints from the permanent collection. This exhibition, as a matter of fact, opened May third and may be visited daily, except Mondays, from ten to six and Sundays from two to six. The Museum will be closed during August. . . .

The end of April *Miss Fannie E. Wakely* rebuked us for getting credit for the prayer we printed at the end of our column on April 23d, as she says that our own Mr. Morley printed the same prayer at the end of his *Bowling Green* for February 20th, and that she had then sent it him "as part of a fervent letter of appreciation." It was our oversight that we had not seen the prayer at the time, and we certainly did not mean to do an injustice to Miss Wakely's "beloved Mr. Morley." Simply one of those incidents of duplication that one cannot always guard against. Someone else had sent it in to us.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

RENTING for year, as is, country cottage, six rooms; ideal for writer; low rental. Address A, Saturday Review.

HENRY, Longwell & Another, 244 Madison Ave., still have, to their dismay, copies of *Notes on Bermuda,* exquisite bibelot, only $1, must be sold as author is hounding us. Orders filled, Oh, with alacrity. My name is HENRY, ASH land 4-6800.

CUBICLE, The (ex-Goldfish Bowl). Old patrons glad to hear the Special Spinach has been put back on menu for Monday luncheons. Fine roughage for hot weather. Apply old clients for new address.

PUBLISHERS! Your advertising seems to us very flaccid; devoid of hormones; in short, lousy. Do you really *read* the books you write about? You're wasting your jack. Let young, bristling agency advise you. PETER HERMIT, c/o *Saturday Review.*

TOURIST, going to visit New York this summer, would like an expert's list of the twelve best (not arty) second-hand bookstores in Manhattan. Places where I can browse and get educated. Don't want firsts, but good classic stuff in fair condition. RYECROFT, *Saturday Review.*

KENTUCKIAN, stranger in New York, will generously requite suggestion where he may find, properly compounded, the frosted tumbler of his nativity. Supply own mint if necessary. Discretion. COLONEL P., *Saturday Review.*

WILL ingenious agent who inserted those cleverly disguised book advts in Public Notices column, N. Y. *Herald Tribune,* inform perplexed publisher whether they pulled? Confidential. E. M., c/o *Saturday Review.*

AUTHOR will perhaps consider renting country home on Long Island for July and August, cheap, but only to exceptional tenants who can be trusted with valuable library. 5 bedrooms, 2 sleeping porches, 3 baths, garage, one acre ill-tended demesne. Conditions wholly exceptional. ALPHA, *Saturday Review.*

RED-HEADED LEAGUE. It is suggested to form a social sorority of red-headed women employed in N. Y. City bookshops. Offensive and defensive alliance against Mediterranean types. Are you red enough? Give details. B. and C., c/o *Saturday Review.*

CASTLE in the Austrian Alps, long a private residence, will take a few paying guests this summer. Lessons in German may be had from a university teacher. Trout fishing. Rates very reasonable. References desired. Z, c/o *Saturday Review.*

GENTLEMEN interested in proper brewing of malt liquors for private use are eligible to join The Company of Amateur Brewers and to receive a copy of the printed "Proceedings"; for information write to A. P. W., c/o *Saturday Review.*

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In 1927 Dr. Sven Hedin started from Peking with a remarkable caravan of Swedish, German, and Chinese scientists to explore the vast regions of the Gobi Desert. The expedition plotted its way through the sandy waste, braving sand-storms, a fierce Mongolian winter, robber bands, camel thieves, and belligerent local rulers. Sven Hedin's journal of their travels has turned out to be, in the words of the *London Times,* "one of the most interesting travel tales ever written, containing adventures which have had no equal since the days of Marco Polo." Lewis Gannett says in his review in the *N. Y. Herald-Tribune:* "It is rich reading—the story of an adventure which will be remembered when all the stunt flights are forgotten." *With 114 illustrations and 3 maps.* $5.00

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